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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE ENGLISH CANADIAN PROSE DOCUMENTARY

by

© WILLIAM BURTON STOCKS

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE ENGLISH CANADIAN PROSE DOCUMENTARY submitted by William Burton Stocks in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

A mirror held up to nature is not so important in a dynamic and fast changing world as the hammer which shapes it....It is as a hammer, not a mirror, that I have sought to use the medium that came to my somewhat restive hand.[1]

John Grierson

ABSTRACT

This presentation is an examination of the use in Canada of the prose documentary, a process of communication that is able to change men's values and ultimately their lives. In the first chapter I examine the nature of those images in the documentary that outrage the reader, and thus provide the documentary with its power and pertinence. I show how the transformation of these images results in involvement of the press, change in public opinion, and government action. I show the importance of the myth upon which the image of outrage is based, and the process of mass education which results when such a myth is destroyed.

In the second chapter I examine the documentary, particularly as it applies to Canada: how it began as a result of Robert Flaherty's attraction to the life of the men of the Canadian north, and how John Grierson became its leading theoretician and entrepreneur. I discuss how Grierson personally developed the Canadian National Film Board and spread the documentary idea through every Canadian media, profoundly influencing many Canadian artists. I discuss the various techniques of documentary (many borrowed from the

more "overtly" creative writers) and show how they produce believability and contemporary pertinence. Finally I survey the use of the documentary approach and comment on the state of the documentary in all Canadian media, particularly prose.

I then examine two popular and influential Canadian literary documentaries. In chapter three I examine Farley Mowat's People of the Deer and The Desperate People, and in chapter four I examine Isabel LeBourdais' The Trial of Steven Truscott. I examine the images of outrage contained in these books and show the public, media, and government reaction to these images. I show the myths upon which the images are based.

I examine the operation of the documentary process in these books and show how believability, meaningfulness, and contemporary pertinence is created. I examine the point of view taken by the author: whether the author is camera eye, outside of moral judgment, allowing the reader to be judge; whether the author is voice of the reader's conscience; or whether the author becomes the voice of the suffering character. And I examine the author as a saviour who puts his subject on the sacrificial altar--in some perverse parody of the old myth of the self-sacrificing hero.

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I

THE IMAGE OF OUTRAGE

In one section of The Desperate People Farley Mowat speaks of some myths of the north:

> We had long since acquired strong mental images of the dogged, preserving Mountie driving his dogs through howling blizzards, that justice might be done, and that his Eskimo brother might be served; of the parental fur trader who treated the Eskimo with the kindly forbearance of the good father toward a rather reckless child; of the self-sacrificing missionaries who gave themselves up to searing frost and cruel hardships so that the immortal soul of the poor pagan might come safe to Heaven when he died.
>
> Men believe that which they wish to believe, and most of them prefer to believe that which gives solace to their consciences. Who is to blame us if we chose the myth? (118-119)

But, Mowat does blame us. The literary documentary is specifically designed to destroy such comfortable, self-deluding myths, and The Desperate People is a fine example of such a documentary.

Mowat's documentary relies upon the power of images used in a certain way. These images present a situation that convincingly contradicts the conventional expectation and as such is felt by its audience as a violation of feelings and principles they hold basic to their definition of self and

society. They are images of outrage.

Images of outrage are usually dependent on "enduring social myths" such as those dealing with justice, freedom, equality, and the family; and usually if such an image does not directly offend one of these homely virtues it will not succeed in outraging. It follows that by a study of these images of outrage it is possible to discover what social myths are essential to the Canadian consciousness and provide an indication of the changes taking place in the myth structure.

The strength of the documentary process is that it brings about a change in the consciousness of the reader; but to do this there must be a transformation of this image in the reader's mind. Images are transitory, a glimpse of film, and for them to become metaphors stunts the power of the outrage and reduces the documentary to rhetoric or polemic. For the documentary to become a success it is necessary for the reader to regard the image of outrage as a symbol. Symbols endure and modify anew--that is until they are either replaced or worn out.

Since the symbol's validity has been assured by the documentary framework, it remains for the reader to apply his newly gained symbolic understanding to other situations.

Thus the image of outrage can bring about a new emotional outlook, a new point of view that ultimately affects the reader's entire concept of reality. Once transformed into a symbol, the image of outrage has forced the reader into personal or social action, and change must result. Perhaps a short example will make the notion of the image of outrage more clear.

Deep within the Canadian consciousness lies the myth of man's kinship with the animals. In this land of ours in which the frontier plays such an important role, as Fry would say, it soon becomes painfully obvious that it is the animal--and not the human intruder--who expresses a oneness with his world. Within that realization lie two directions of movement: to preserve and honor the animal, and the animal in man, or destroy it and obliterate all memory of its existence. Alison White has expressed this understanding so well in her essay "The Ark and the Abattoir: Poles in Modern Canadian Poetry":

> Since about 1950 Canadians have in their poetry indeed moved about two polar figures. At one pole is Noah, at the other Macbeth. Noah is the guardian, preserver of animals and of humanity. He reminded us that the beasts and the people are in the same boat--now, perhaps more than ever, as evolutionary man, with the beasts inside him, in Mandel's phrase. Evolutionary man seeks survival in a dangerous world. Canada, remote and apparently "safe", rises out of the world's deluges and holocausts like a spiritual Ararat.[1]

Much Canadian outrage has been based on this "enduring social myth" of our beneficient guardianship of the animal world. A good example of the ironic understanding of this myth can be seen in the "save the seal" crusade which has been going on since 1964 when a CBC news film documented incredible cruelty and viciousness in the annual baby seal hunt. The literary documentary that was later produced as a result of the film--Peter Lust's The Last Seal Pup--lists a series of the most appalling images of man's violation of the animal world: descriptions of skinning the pups alive (it is faster than killing them first), of goring out the eyes of mother seals trying to protect their young, of a crude caesarean performed on a pregnant seal to take her unborn pup. But the most appalling image of abdication of responsibility is the factual verification of Lust's charge that this slaughter will bring about the extermination of the race. Genocide is the most horrible crime of all.

The process within the reader's mind by which these images become symbols is not clear--but what is clear is that once a symbol is created action results. And this action culminates in existential change within the individual and political change within the culture. Initial response generally attempts to eliminate the symbolic violation of the

social myth; to stop the seal slaughter. But since government depends upon the existence of these "enduring social myths" for its continuance, it will usually not admit that the myth has been violated. Thus the power of the symbol increases because it becomes a metaphor and perhaps a symbol for the government's failure to face reality.

In its task of forcing the government to come to terms with these symbols of outrage, the news media can usually be expected, as it were, to write the final chapter of a documentary-outrage. Clearly the Canadian press perpetuated and strengthened the power of the baby seal slaughter as symbol of Canada the destroyer of animals. Radio, television, and newspaper outrage faced Canadians wherever they turned. And the press not only repeated Lust's images of outrage over and over, they uncovered new supporting images to further outrage their audience.

Such involvement of press and resulting change in public opinion should lead to government action. But even if media and public pressure force government recognition and correction of the violation of the myth, it is difficult to re-affirm the power of the old myth. Once the symbol has been created it is difficult to destroy. The individual who has succumbed to the power of such a symbol has gained a new

AS SEAL SLAUGHTER SEASON NEARS

Carnage on Ice Faces New Outcry

—CP Wirephoto

SEAL HUNTERS . . . eye wood for clubs

By IAN MACDONALD
Sun Ottawa Bureau

OTTAWA — They're small, furry, big-eyed and cute and they die in a gory way that stains ice floes with blood red patches.

Fisheries Minister Jack Davis is well aware of the emotional tug and the mounting wave of international protest as he goes this weekend to witness the annual baby seal hunt off the east coast.

But before going, he indicated in Parliament Tuesday that the government is going to have a hard look at the continuance of the hunt — at least in the present form.

About 200 New Brunswick seal hunters had planned to start killing seals at noon today in defiance of an order by Davis, who had delayed the hunt opening until Friday.

However, a shift in wind blew floes carrying a big seal herd farther off the coast today, putting the animals out of reach of the land-based hunters.

Government regulations will limit the killing of the white-coated baby seals to 50,000. The herd is estimated to number 75,000.

They are clubbed to death by hunters — who crush their thin heads with wooden clubs — in order not to damage the pelts.

The annual kill has been going on for years — but it is television and color film that has produced the worldwide outcry in the last three or four years.

Davis is taking his first trip to see the hunt. Going along with him are interested members of Parliament, humane society officials, a television crew from France and newsmen.

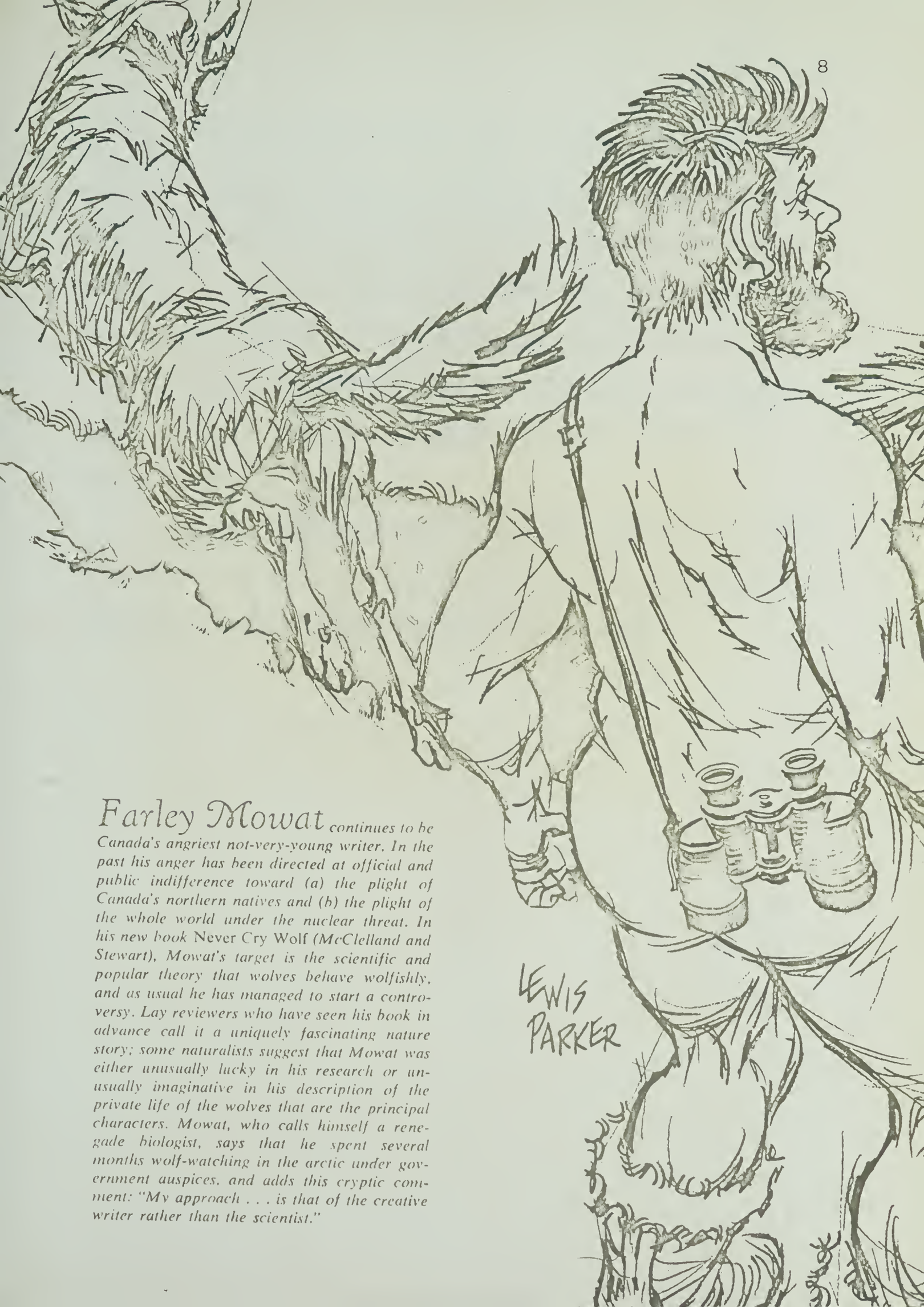
The government has received many protests from at home and around the world. There has been new interest this year from France and Belgium.

To the government it is a

way of looking at things. He can never return to his old faith, his old reality, his old myths. It is in this way that the father of documentary, John Grierson, meant his remark that documentary is the new means of education.

A myth as important as that of Canada, the preserver of the animal, will, of course, have many other attempts made on its life. Grey Owl and Marshall Saunders have spent their lives trying to bring a new reality to Canadians. However, the most successful attacks on the myth have been launched by Farley Mowat. In his Never Cry Wolf (1963)--issued about the same time as Fred Bodsworth's beautifully lyrical but symbolically ineffective Last of the Curlews--Mowat chose to repudiate the reputation of the wolf who, he said, had too long taken the blame for man's destructiveness. Despite excellent sales and widely distributed publicity, it has only been in the last few years that Mowat's images of outrage have been transferred into symbols. (This was not the case in Russia where the translation of Wolf brought about sufficient public pressure to force government protection for wolves!)

Since 1966 there have been at least four books published in Canada in support of wolves (Zoologist Douglas Pimlott's is the best), and, as is usual in symbol formation,



Farley Mowat continues to be Canada's angriest not-very-young writer. In the past his anger has been directed at official and public indifference toward (a) the plight of Canada's northern natives and (b) the plight of the whole world under the nuclear threat. In his new book Never Cry Wolf *(McClelland and Stewart), Mowat's target is the scientific and popular theory that wolves behave wolfishly, and as usual he has managed to start a controversy. Lay reviewers who have seen his book in advance call it a uniquely fascinating nature story; some naturalists suggest that Mowat was either unusually lucky in his research or unusually imaginative in his description of the private life of the wolves that are the principal characters. Mowat, who calls himself a renegade biologist, says that he spent several months wolf-watching in the arctic under government auspices, and adds this cryptic comment: "My approach . . . is that of the creative writer rather than the scientist."*

the press has done much of the work. One widely reported story took place in February, 1970 on Lake Simcoe, Ontario, when two snowmobilers pursued a small bush wolf for ninety minutes, hitting it twenty times with their machines. When the exhausted wolf took refuge behind a mound of snow, the hunters jumped the snowmobiles over the mound and broke the animal's back. They then applied for their twenty-five dollar bounty.

In the wake of a deluge of public protest, the Canadian Wolf Defender's Society was formed; and as might be expected, charter members included Farley Mowat.

II

THE DOCUMENTARY IDEA

1. The History of the Documentary

Canada's contribution to the form of documentary began in 1918 with Robert Flaherty's trip to the Hudson's Bay region to discover new mineral wealth. Rather than iron he returned with images. The north and particularly the men of the north, "natural" men in harmony with their world, was overpoweringly attractive to Flaherty--as it was thirty years later for Farley Mowat. And like Mowat, Flaherty felt obliged to document these men and their lives. Thus was born Nanook of the North, the film which gave form and meaning to the film of fact that it had never had before.

Nanook led to Flaherty's friendship with a young film critic, John Grierson, and the two men together began to evolve the idea of the documentary. (It was a few years later that Grierson was to give Canadian writers a distinct tradition of documentary through his personal development of the Canadian National Film Board.) Grierson was so impressed with Flaherty's work that, a few years later, he offered this tribute to the maker of Nanook:

I have met some of the great men of cinema, but can think of none more impressive in his mind and presence than the American-born, Canadian-trained explorer, Robert Flaherty. Since 1921 when he brought Nanook out of the arctic and abandoned his discovering of Belcher Islands and mapping of Northern Labrador for cinema, he has stood uncompromisingly for everything that is fine in film. (140)[1]

Grierson saw something in Nanook that was new and exciting:

it was one of the first attempts by a film maker to deal creatively with a factual situation.

Nanook was the simple story of an Eskimo family and its fight for food, but its approach to the whole question of film-making was something entirely novel at the time it was made. It was a record of everyday life so selective in its detail and sequence, so intimate in its shots, and so appreciative of the nuances of common feeling, that it was a drama in many ways more telling than anything that had come out of the manufactured sets of Hollywood. (203)

The word documentary first appeared in February 1929 in a film review in the New York Sun. The film, Moana, was an on-location factual record of the daily events in the life of a young Polynesian girl, and had been commissioned as a sequel to Nanook by Flaherty's Hollywood backers.[2] The reviewer, of course, was John Grierson, and he had invented the word documentary (derived it from the French term for travelogue, Documentaire) to describe the value of Moana. This value, Grierson stated, lay in director Flaherty's "creative treatment of actuality" (13).

Flaherty was an artist. He spent months observing

his material on its actual location so as to allow a theme to arise naturally as a result of understanding. His films Nanook of the North (1920) and particularly Moana (1929) were thus more expressions of social analysis than they were descriptive pictures, more creative dramatization than factual reporting.

But Grierson was not completely satisfied with Moana. It was too "arty" and in not showing the white man's exploitation of native labour, it had missed the vital story. Grierson was dreaming of a way to eliminate war, poverty and oppression and he believed that by telling the "vital stories" in this new documentary technique, he had found the way.

Before Flaherty, few film makers had realized the aesthetic and persuasive potential of the factual situation. The early newsreels and travelogues, in their descriptive pictures of everyday life, did little more than pander to the public expectation of conventional sincerity. As Grierson later said: "The newsreel has gone dithering on, mistaking the phenomenon for the thing in itself, and ignoring everything that gave it the trouble of conscience and penetration and thought" (201).

Grierson had come from Britain with a Rockefeller fellowship to study propaganda techniques. He and his fellow

political scientists at Chicago University were, as Grierson put it, "reformers open and avowed, worried about the way the world was going" (249). The conventional articulators of reality--the church and the school--were not doing their job: "Men have lost their faith. They have seen the world going into disorder...and nowhere have they found that leadership, mental and religious, which seemed to be taking hold of essentials" (269). What is required, said Grierson, is a "new language of apprehension," which "must in fact be something more in the nature of a dramatic language than a rational one. The process will be one of interpretation rather than one of record" (193).

The value of unappraised, factual information has been over-rated. As Grierson said, "education has concentrated so much on people knowing things that it has not sufficiently taught them to feel things" (123). But this path leading to re-vitalized feeling would travel on a solid foundation of provable fact. It is the strength of the documentary idea, that it takes facts and uses them to demonstrate basic truths. In this way no man can escape being personally implicated in whatever situation the documentary is examining. No man can use the old dodge, "But this is only a fiction, only a product of someone's imagination!"

In the early days of documentary, Grierson would many times say something like the following: (This is taken from an address Grierson gave before the American Library Association.) "It is not information that is needed today; in fact, it is not information that is sought. It is enlightenment, and that is a very different thing, involving, as it does, the dramatic process of sparking the mind and the heart into new life, new vision, new realization" (303). Enlightenment (usually thought of as an eastern philosophical process, although this tradition can just as easily be shown to be western) deals with man's progression from one level of reality to another. One realizes with the whole of one's existence a truth previously ignored or unknown. In People of the Deer, when Farley Mowat returns from the north, he is a changed man. Never again can he look at anything the way he did before his experience. His book, clearly in the tradition of the documentary, invites the reader to enter into a new reality, or as Grierson says, to experience "new life, new vision, new realization" (303).

However, "new life and new vision" can have political implications. It was, of course, Lenin's notion that film is a powerful weapon of class struggle. And Grierson, who had edited the American edition of Eisenstein's Potemkin, was

certainly aware of the power of documentary as a political weapon. But the class model of revolution--a seizure of the state in violent struggle--was unthinkable to Grierson. When he suggested "nothing less than a drastic spring cleaning of the concepts we teach and the sentiments by which we govern our action" (263), he meant to "free minds" by forcing people to re-examine their beliefs about their world. He was closer to Lennon than to Lenin: "We all want to change your head. You tell me it's the institution...you better free your mind instead."[3] The western drive to do something about the state of the world, when interpreted in terms of "eastern" philosophical process becomes, "if you desire change in the world, change yourself." The search for enlightenment has nothing to do with the amassing of more dates, more categories, more classifications, but is an archetypal quest for self-knowledge, which Jung has called "one of the most urgent passions of mankind."[4]

But for all that Grierson was a notable aesthetic theoretician, he was incredibly politically naive. Exactly how attitudes are changed by documentary communication did not seem to trouble Grierson, even with his background in the social sciences. It is enough, he seems to say, that documentary can move people to action; he seems unwilling to pur-

sue the problem of the context in which the documentary and its audience exist.

There are ethical and psychological aspects that every documentarist should face. Since Grierson would never admit publicly that the social context works against any change not in the interests of maintaining its present reality, he could then avoid the ethical problem that he, as a documentarist, might be raising false hopes; creating pressure for change without some possibility of change. Psychologically the problem may be one of frustration--which may lead to cynicism, and perhaps increased resistance to attitude change when it really matters.

Political issues were, as Grierson put it, "the whole of realism" but he maintained that the "'agency' of correct political change is not my concern" (253). He said his duty was to "wake the heart and the will," but it was for the political parties to "make before the people their own case for leadership" (250). Yet he felt that the documentary would bring about great political changes, would bring us into a "new and interim society which is neither Socialistic nor Capitalistic" (226), a world-wide system of harmony and justice.

While in the United States in the early 1920's, Grier-

son became enchanted with the possibilities of film. (He lived for a while in Hollywood and studied with Chaplin, Stirnberg and Von Stronheim.) When he returned to England in 1927, he gained government support for a series of documentary films.

By 1937 his films, lectures and mass of writing began to produce world-wide results. Documentary film production had been set up in fourteen countries, and in 1939 Grierson was invited to Canada to found the National Film Board. Not only did he accept the post of first film commissioner, but he stayed on in that post until 1945. He then returned to Britain, where he produced television documentaries until his death in 1957.

It is unfortunate that Grierson worked exclusively with film. The problems of censorship and control are more complex and substantially different for this medium than for the printed word, speech, drama and other public activity. The cost of film production and, even more important, distribution, places it almost exclusively in the hands of large syndicates or of government.

Grierson, a man dedicated to lifting the veil of illusion from around his fellows, was never able to accept the true nature of the democracy he so whole-heartedly sup-

ported. He was always surprised when restrictions were placed on his films: "Silly enough it sounds, but obstacle after obstacle was put in the way of the documentary film whenever it set itself to the adult task of performing a public service. Sometimes it came in the cry of the censor that the screen was to be kept free of what was called 'controversy'. More often it was in the whispered obstruction emanating from Conservative Party politicians" (216-217).

Grierson accepted government interference in his artistic effort with a zeal that today would brand him a "sell-out." This is his advice to documentarists in the government service, faced with restrictions put on discussion of controversial problems: "The creative worker must not dissociate himself from government service. If he is a practical operator and a practical reformer he will take the situation for what it is and do his utmost within the limitations set, and this is one of the disciplines which the creative artist must learn..." (322).

In one sense the restrictions imposed by the nature of film are self-imposed, because the documentary idea was not originally thought of in terms of film. As Grierson says: "The documentary idea was not basically a film idea at all... The medium happened to be the most convenient and most

exciting available to us...it might, in principle, have been a movement in documentary writing, or documentary radio"(250).

2. Notes on the Documentary

Documentary communication is that which seeks to initiate a process of introspection (which may culminate in public action) by shaping factual information in the most persuasive and culturally relevant manner possible. Documentary is not mere muckraking--it goes far beyond the public role of pointing the finger at specific fraud or deceit; it rather points the finger at self (both the writer's and the reader's) in relation to the world in which both live.

It is generally believed an artist working with factual material can, with ability and work, begin to re-create the conscience of his race. But as for the poetic task of redeeming its unconscious, only an imaginative work can fulfil this most important aim. This is not altogether true. A strictly imaginative work, with no literal frame of reference outside the author's mind, can be evaded today by a defensive reader who claims it has no relevance for him. Perhaps a poem can communicate much wisdom on an unconscious level, but if only a very few read it--how many lives will it have changed? And besides, is such a lack of factual images that an artist must turn to his dreams? Certainly to do

factual justice to his material and yet maintain equal pride in the literary possibilities offered by his imagination, the documentary artist must be skillful and ambitious. To illuminate living material with a personal angle of vision is difficult, but not more difficult than any imaginative artistic task.

The strength of the documentary depends upon its ability to confront the spectator--to outrage him. As a group of young documentary film makers have said:

> We want a form of propaganda that polarizes, angers, excites, for the purpose of discussion--a way of getting at people, not by making concessions to where they are, but by showing them where you are and then forcing them to deal with that, bringing out all their assumptions, their prejudices, their imperfect perceptions.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> You want to make films that unnerve, that shake assumptions, that threaten, that do not soft-sell, but hopefully (an impossible ideal) explode like grenades in peoples faces, or open minds up like a good can opener.[5]

The producer of documentary cannot allow his audience to escape from a personal confrontation. The documentarist does not demonstrate unjustness so as to generate guilt; unjustness must be a cause for outrage if it is to achieve the aim of personal change. If a realization titillates, that is if it satisfies some secret desire to witness (to become more intimately guilty of) its horrors, then the documentarist has failed to demonstrate the psychological immediacy of the

realization.

Outrage, of course, depends upon irony--the pleasure of contrasting appearance with reality. The first lesson man must learn is that things are not as they seem, ever. There is a continual tension between what should be--what we believe phenomena to be--and what we suspect it really is. Naturally we never reach a stage of complete understanding--reality continually advances a step or two (or perhaps a few miles) before us. In fact, it may be one function of documentary--of art--to make us aware of the nature of reality. Documentary makes a mockery of the promise and fitness of things, and our inevitable reaction is one of outrage at our dupability, or perhaps at the deceitfulness of our fellows.

Documentary depends for its sense of realism upon the ironic reversal of appearance and reality. It is the undercutting of the romantic view that creates the illusion of reality. The term realism is, of course, complex and ambiguous. A sense of fact or authenticity is a product of literary technique. In a kind of Wildeian paradox, literature is based upon literature, not life. In this sense, it is the role of the documentary outrage to destroy the myths and replace them not with fact, but with new, and let us hope more psychologically true myths.

There is, however, a documentary responsibility to remain faithful to factual truth, or more properly to follow the documentary ground rule: Fact should not only be fact, but must clearly be seen to be fact. Farley Mowat, perhaps the best known Canadian documentarist, has shocked many people for whom a documentary is a scientifically verifiable fact. "Piping," making up quotes that fit a situation or clinch a scene, or "telescoping," projecting situations to a logical conclusion, are the instruments with which the prose documentarist constructs. Mowat's arguments that he "tells the truth and not the facts," because "it it didn't happen the way I present it--it should have,"[6] are terribly frustrating to men for whom the division between appearance and reality is the division between sanity and insanity. To tell such men that the best documentaries deal less with actuality than with poetry, is to leave such conscientious documentary spectators in fear and misery. How shall they tell actuality from poetry and poetry from forgery?

Yet it is this conflict between empirical investigation and that of intuitive imagination that the documentary process seeks to resolve. Ortega defines this conflict as that between "scientific psychology" and "imaginary psychology" or to use the positivist's terms, between verifiable

and visionary experience. An example of this problem basic to documentary can be seen in the Ontario Legislature Committee's report on the CBC television documentary Air of Death, which was concerned with fluoride poisoning coming from a fertilizer plant. The committee found the film not only to contain half-truths and un-truths but, "Some of the un-truths have been persisted in when the people who made the program already were in possession of the truthful answers!"[7]

The committee regarded the making and exhibiting of the film "incomprehensibly irresponsible."[8] Obviously the maker of the film extended the circumscribed reality of the story too far; and in violating facts that could be checked by others, may have lessened the believability of their presentation. But as Farley Mowat says, "Facts can be used to prove anything."[9] Truth can only be found--if at all--in the mind and heart of the documentary maker. The truth of Air of Death is uncontradictable, even though some of the facts may be held in dispute.

The problem is that the very things which make documentary uniquely suited to propaganda and art, make it uniquely unsuited to accurate impartial reportage. In video documentary this is easy to see. We are all aware that the camera can, and frequently does, lie.[10] But the realization

that the artistic process of selecting, framing and editing make it impossible for the camera not to lie, comes as a shock to many people. For the documentarist is the victim as well as the recorder; he approaches happenings with preconception as well as inducement.[11] As one National Film Board documentarist has said: "Machiavelli is a Sunday School scholar compared to the documentary maker scenting his prey. Nothing matters except what eventually shows on the screen."[12] Or, as Jimmy Breslin, a New York columnist says: "To put quotes in the mouths of living people is a more audacious act of the imagination than to invent words for people who have never existed, especially when the writer knows these quotes will be read by the participants and he will be judged for it."[13]

Progression toward a new reality (the professed aim of documentary) advances those confronted through different levels of knowing. Each time the learner leaves behind an old world (or myth, or reality) and enters a new. But to progress one requires a guide--a guide that can be trusted. In no other literary form is the <u>public</u> relationship between the author and his work so important. A documentary outrage, it seems, cannot succeed without a public (media?) recognition of the author's extreme sincerity, dedication and commitment

to his espoused cause.

A successful author of documentary outrage has no choice but to constantly demonstrate the genuineness of his outrage, and the purity of his motive. That is to say, not only through his writing, but in his public life, must he practice the conventions of sincerity with great skill. It is on this basis that the documentary audience convinces itself of the factuality of the documentarist's argument. "He is honest, so what he tells is honest" goes the generally held belief which is applied both to life and to literature. (The critics have discovered that to discredit the documentarist, or his motives, is to discredit what he says.) The documentary demands a continuing commitment between art and life.[14]

3. The Documentary Today

It has long seemed that television was the ideal medium for the documentary. It can provide a vast audience and enough money to produce, but whether it can give sufficient artistic freedom is another question. In Canada, the CTV network seems afraid of any controversy that might alienate anyone of its sponsors. CBC-TV is a government network and is less subject to sponsor pressure but more to political pressure. (Remember the scandal revolving around "Mr. Pearson"

the $20 thousand CBC production cancelled the night before it was to be aired by demand from the Prime Minister's office?)

The state of television documentary in Canada is best seen by reference to the "7 Days" controversy. Two members of the staff of the program, Pat Watson and Laurier Lapierre, had become personally identified with the program, its contents, and its opinion. They were single-handedly attempting to overhaul the image structure of their countryman. And their documentary efforts were seen by hundreds of thousands each week and discussed by many more. (In one week they received over twelve hundred letters of personal congratulations on the program's content.[15])

However, CBC President J. Alphonse Ouimet saw their individual efforts threatening his control over public affairs programming. In the spring of 1966, Ouimet announced that Watson "had too many opinions," and Lapierre "always shows his emotion."[16] During an interview with Mrs. Daniel Truscott, (whose son Steven's rape-murder was under review by the Supreme Court) Ouimet observed Lapierre wiped away tears: "I couldn't believe it. I looked at him and he was wet under the eyes--well, this is a matter of policy, we just cannot have this. The hosts are the CBC, and cannot express any opinion."[17] In the fall, the adventurous "This Hour Has 7

Days" was replaced by the sedate, more anonymous "The Way It Is."

Considerably more enterprise and conviction has been displayed by CBC radio in their documentaries.[18] Those produced by Glenn Gould for the CBC-FM network during the winter of 1969-70 were superb. Using a technique he perfected, Gould wove 260 hours of interviews he had conducted with Newfoundlanders into an hour program. Only the voices of the "Newfies" were heard, two at the same time, one from the right stereo FM channel, the other from the left; both voices punctuated by the constant loud pounding of waves against a desolate Newfoundland shore. The listener is overpowered by his feelings of what Newfoundland must be, and the poignancy felt by those forced to leave their homes by the Newfoundland government. Gould has also produced radio and television documentaries about the idea of the north. His reputation as a documentarist has begun to equal his reputation as a pianist.

CBC radio has presented many individual documentaries of note ("Population Explosion" and the two-part series on Napoleon's march to and from Moscow are two excellent examples) as well as weekly programs like "Concern" (AM-FM) which maintains a standard of documentary of which Grierson would have

been proud. CBC radio also presents documentary spectaculars like the two-hour radio première of Rolf Hochhuth's "Soldiers," originally a powerful play documenting Churchill's wartime experience and dealing with the tragedy of power. (It was booed at its Berlin première in 1967 and banned in England for almost a year and a half.)

Immediately following the play came Betty Shapiro's "Cross Country Check-Up," a radio-telephone talk show, in which listeners across Canada were invited to phone in and exchange their comments about the play. Mrs. Shapiro, with unusual thoroughness, even placed a call to Venice, to one of the participants depicted in the play, to see if his version was any different from that of Hochhuth's.

Across Canada the "open-line" radio talk shows are extremely popular--so popular in fact that one Vancouver "open-liner" is paid in excess of $85 thousand a year in that position.[19] While these programs rarely rise above the journalistic level of documentary, they provide the housewife with some notion of the shift in reality that documentary is bringing about.

Documentary plays (popular in the 1930's) are finding a new sympathetic audience. It is possible in the United States to experience an intimate portrayal of the American

rape of Vietnam (which includes the jamming of a twelve-inch ruler up the vagina of one girl who plays a Vietnamese woman). One Canadian documentary play, Saturday Night Associate Editor Peter Desbarats' The Great White Computer, is a dramatized version of the events which led to the destruction of the Sir George Williams Computer. In Canadian theatre we are slowly allowing the creativity of the actor and of the audience to mould the author's reality. One thing is sure: The play is not the thing. Much relevance can be added by allowing the actors to work out variations on the play's theme. Desbarats discovered this when he found Black Power demonstrators protesting Computer. As he says: "They took over the stage at intermission and the structure of the play is such that the audience didn't know whether or not the demonstration was part of the play. It was a perfect meeting of theatre and reality."[20] There are, of course, many problems inherent in documentary theatre: the ease with which censorship can be effected, the cost of renting a suitable building, the cost of publicity, the need for expensive lighting and multi-media equipment, and the basic problem that theatre can serve only a very limited audience.

Many of the same objections might be made to documentary film production in Canada, but for the outstanding

success of the National Film Board, certainly the best producer and distributor of documentary film in the world. Extensive distribution facilities, together with free rental makes NFB films available--and seen--throughout Canada. The production staff is adventuresome, skilled and seemingly independent of political influence.

Probably the best example of recent advances in Canadian documentary film can be seen through examination of the NFB's "Challenge for Change" program. The staff of the project publishes an irregularly issued bulletin mailed free on request which details their aims, their achievements and their failures. The program's staff have set up workshops to see how film can move people to action and how society can be pressured to bring about change. In filming the stories of a small, poor town, St. Jerome, Que., they set up a cutting room on the town's main street and had daily screenings. Townspeople were quick to show initiative in editing the film themselves and in doing so they gained a whole new sense of self and community. On Fogo Island, Newfoundland, the Islanders were given the first showing of their film so that they could change it if they so desired. There were no changes made.

One interesting effect of the "Challenge for Change"

newsletter challenge for change

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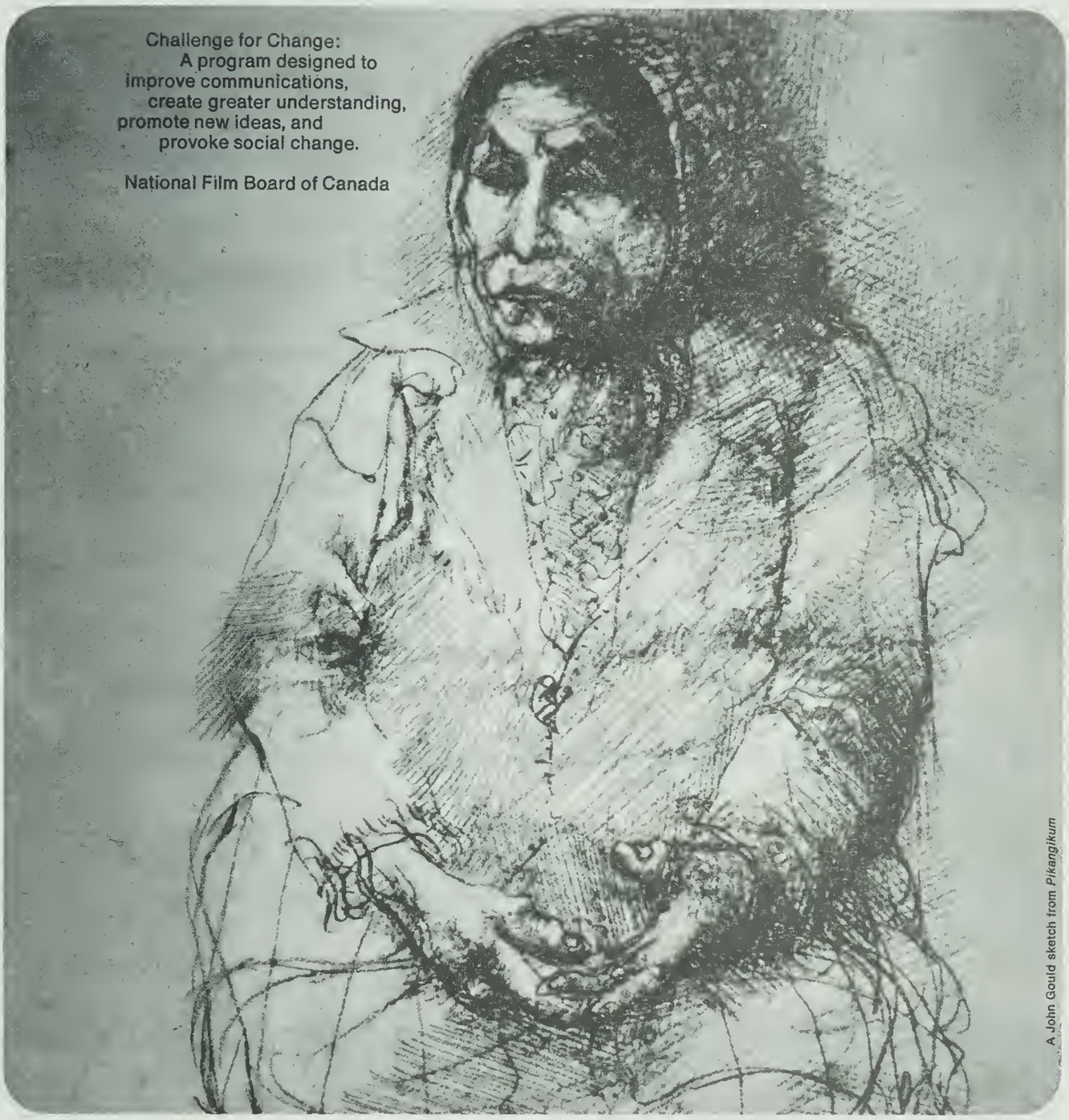

A John Gould sketch from *Pikangikum*

program has been the joint project of the NFB and the Company of Young Canadians to train young Indian volunteers in documentary techniques and send them out to make provocative films about the problems of Indians in Canada. Holding to the stated philosophy of this NFB program ("We are catalysts for social change"[21]) the Indians, through one of their films, enraged local Indian sentiment on the St. Regis Reserve near Cornwall, Ontario. The film makers then led a series of demonstrations (which resulted in a widely publicized border disturbance) which they then filmed. However, even the most broadminded government will not allow positive political action on the part of its employees. Shortly after this disturbance, CYC funds were withheld by the Federal government, and a few months later the NFB was forced to curtail filming in the "Challenge for Change" program as a result of general government austerity.

Of course many amateurs make very interesting documentary films, and many high schools and universities encourage this art with courses in film, and with film-education programs. There is, however, much futility in making a film that few people will see. (Particularly frustrating is making a documentary with its avowed social purpose of promoting change.) There is the possibility that the development of

home video-tape recording devices will provide an answer to the film maker's distribution problem,[22] but for the present there seems only one medium available to the documentarist who wishes to affect large numbers of people, and that is the medium of print.

Certainly print has its disadvantages. Distribution can be a serious problem. Most booksellers handle only the products of major publishers, and large book publishers are notoriously sensitive to potential libel charges. This problem, however, is not insurmountable, and the ease with which writing can be mass produced, together with a tradition of freedom of the press, makes the disadvantages of documentary through print seem relatively unimportant.

Out of the same soil that once produced little magazines have come great numbers of underground weekly and bi-weekly newspapers. In advancing a different view of the real, the young writer-journalist can oppose the official version of reality contained in the daily newspaper. Therein lies great appeal for the young documentarist who likes to compose under pressure and see immediate reaction to his personal articulation of reality.

But many times the "immediate reaction" is a discriminatory attempt by local government to press outdated or

unused obscenity laws, to summarily cancel business or distribution licenses, or to direct police harassment. (The action of the City of Vancouver against the Georgia Straight is a good example.) Even in the conservative Canadian daily newspapers the documentary has conquered ground. Pierre Berton was for many years a writer of truly significant prose as a daily columnist, and every Canadian city has its equivalent of the Vancouver Sun's Bob Hunter. There are, of course, amazing numbers of journals and magazines that pay for documentary work. Besides those magazines dedicated to outrage and reform (Scanlan's and Ramparts in the United States and Canadian Dimension in Canada) there are hundreds of less "radical" sources of income for the writer of documentaries.

There seems little doubt that the literary documentary has achieved more in book form than any other. The author has sufficient space to develop his theme fully, and what is just as important, the writer of literary documentaries can make a living from his work. But there is one other advantage that makes print the most popular medium of outrage. Print, (always available for reference) provides much of the documentary material for the other media. The writer of a successful literary documentary will find his

images transferred to the public mind by all forms of media. The reader gains a sense of the images the book alone could never achieve, and the writer of a documentary that initiates social change has the opportunity of seeing the final chapters of his book on television, hearing them on radio, and reading them in the newspaper.

While of course not all documentary aims to stir up an indifferent public, Grierson claimed that social change was the true aim of documentary. Any "creative treatment of actuality" that did not attempt social change was somehow betraying an ideal, abdicating a responsibility. It was on this point that Grierson argued with Flaherty, who seemed more interested in technique and lyrical statement than results. While the same arguments continue today among documentarists working in all media, little critical attention has been paid this basic aesthetic problem. In fact, insufficient serious critical attention of any kind has been paid the documentary, particularly the literary documentary.

Recognition of the documentary as a serious literary form has been retarded by the distastefulness of the terms previously used to describe it. In its early American form, the literary documentary was titled "Muckraker," a term taken from Pilgrim's Progress--it was applied to a man too busy

raking muck to be aware of his spiritual possibilities, and was coined by Teddy Roosevelt in 1906. He applied it to those making "sweeping and unjust charges" against public men, and set it against the three pioneer American documentaries of the early 1900's: Ida M. Terbell's History of the Standard Oil Co. (1904), Lincoln Steffen's The Shame of the Cities (1904), and Upton Sinclair's The Jungle (1906). (The Jungle with its attack on contaminated meat brought about the enactment of the pure food and drug laws.)

In the 1930's the American literary documentary was called reportage. Proletarian Literature (1935), a popular American anthology, defined this new prose form in this way: "Reportage is three-dimensional reporting. The writer not only condenses reality; he must get his readers to see and feel the facts. The best writers of reportage do their editorializing via their artistry...."[23] Despite all the interest paid this form by most American writers, there remained the old prejudice against taking "bread and butter" writing too seriously. There was also the movement's Marxist political doctrine which frightened potential converts. The best American authors stuck strictly to fiction. Few literary men would consider the production of such a base and politically inopportune art as reportage.

Within the last few years, however, much has changed. The contemporary documentary artist tells us that the general reader wants to measure his life against reality created from events with which he can associate, that there seems to be no practical justification for fictionalizing when the world of experience has become so extravagant that just to match what is with accuracy takes the documentary into the world of the imagination. And, largely because of the publication of two recent American documentaries--Truman Capote's In Cold Blood, and Norman Mailer's Armies of the Night--critics have begun to take the documentary seriously.

What first attracted critical interest was the great commercial success of Capote's In Cold Blood. It was at the top of the best seller list for over a year, and, in the process of selling eighty thousand copies in hard cover and over two and one-half million in paperback--in America alone-it became one of the biggest money-makers in publishing history. Translated into twenty-five foreign languages (including Hebrew, Catalan, Afrikaans and Icelandic), it has already earned Capote over $3 million, including $500,000 for movie rights.[24]

On the dust jacket of his book, Capote implied he was the inventor of "a serious new literary form: The non-fiction

novel,"[25] to which Mary McCarthy charged that his "greatest contribution to literary innovation was to publicize the author first, the book second."[26] Probably it was Capote's statement-of-intent more than anything else that makes In Cold Blood significant, for reviewers over the English-speaking world were practically unanimous in their celebrations of the establishment of the documentary as a literary form. (Barbara Moon in Saturday Night called it: "The most interesting and mis-prized literary flowering of the twentieth century."[27])

Tom Wolfe, an American documentary artist with much talent, has also contributed to documentary literary criticism: "Every technique of fiction is now available to us," said Wolfe. Stream-of-consciousness and subjective truth is the next breakthrough. Gay Talese's article in Esquire in 1958, 'Joe Louis at 50,' is a classic in this direction; Truman Capote, who in my opinion is not a first-class writer, was only doing in In Cold Blood what Talese had done six or seven years before."[28] For no one single invention has been as popular in the United States as has documentary form. There has been such a demand among writers for factual material--the one exactly right factual situation, that Kurt Vonnegut was recently led to say, "It is difficult to find the right muck because so much of it has been raked already."[29]

Among the many influential American literary documentaries has been Jessica Mitford's The American Way of Death (the documentary covered the same ground as Waugh's The Loved One, and had an immense effect on American life and death), Rachel Carson's The Silent Spring (the forerunner of the ecological revolution), and Ralph Nader's Unsafe at Any Speed (translated into seven languages, it was on the best seller list for fifteen weeks, sold over 450,000 hard cover copies and earned $53 thousand for its author[30]). All three books had immediate practical results. Nader's book forced General Motors' "Corvair" off the market and brought about the passage of five major federal laws,[31] but clearly aimed at something more far-reaching. Nader calls his objective "Nothing less than the qualitative reform of the Industrial Revolution,"[32] and his documentary method "A new form of citizenship."[33] Grierson would have mightily approved such practical sentiment.

The best documentary writer in the United States today is Pullitzer prize winner, Norman Mailer. (He won the prize for Armies of the Night, a brilliant account of the 1968 march on The Pentagon.) Mailer, through his recent campaign in the New York mayoralty race, shows one result of the artist's involvement in the area of political change.

Where Americans seem just lately to have discovered the difference between the myth and the reality of their state, Canadians have been aware of this innate irony since Canada was first settled. And this climate of outrage has produced a history of fine effective documentary early in Canada's history.[34] (There were the tracts of Thomas Chandler Haliburton, The Bubble of Canada and Rule and Misrule of the English in America, and the magnificent account of Canadian life sent back to England by the Strictland sisters.) However, by the early 1900's, reports F. W. Watt in The Literary History of Canada, Canadian authors tended to accept the doctrine of "aloofness from action and immediate practice." As he says: "A too active social conscience was looked upon as unhealthy and out of place in the Canadian scene. Writers were praised for their idealism, their respect for the conventional virtues, and their sense of decorum, and by and large they were careful to merit such praise."[35]

In the 1920's and 1930's the whole notion of art was turned upside down. The urgency of coming to terms with the social realities of war and depression created a range and violence of opinions unmatched until the present day. Art became conceived of as propaganda for--or at least symptomatic of--social revolution.[36]

Reportage came to be a "much used form", as Watt puts it.[37] While little of the literature of this period had merit, and its scant effects on Canadian life brought mostly disillusion to its authors, it remains as a tribute to the social conscience of the day. There was Leo Kennedy's "Life's Like a Garbage Can," (Canadian Mercury, June 1928) and, of course, who could forget Prohibitionist Nellie McClung, whose book The Black Candle, an expose of the drug menace in Canada, was accepted in testimony by the League of Nations![38] Dorothy Livesay has gained a reputation as one of the best practitioners of the reportage genre, as indicated by her collection of documentary sketches and poems originally written in the 1930's and recently re-issued as The Documentaries.

Canada has, in the past, gained much literary reputation from her fiction, particularly the novel. But it is now the prose documentary that occupies the creative talent of our best contemporary Canadian writers. Farley Mowat, one of the world's best known documentarists, puts it this way: "Fiction is out. Just finished. Young writers are constantly importuning me to tell them how to write, and one thing I always tell them is 'Don't under any circumstance try to write a novel.'"[39]

Canadian publisher Jack McClelland sees the reader of the novel turning to non-fiction forms:

I think we may see the day soon when there will not be a novel published in Canada. Margaret Laurence's novels only sell about 3,500 in Canada. Ivan Shaffer's book, The Midas Compulsion, has sold about 3,500 and a lot of people bought it because they thought it was non-fiction about the stock market. Gabrielle Roy sold 30,000 copies of the Tin Flute when it came out in 1947, but her latest will only go 3,000 at best. The novel looks like it has had it.[40]

An examination of McClelland and Stewart's catalogue, (see Appendix A for excerpts) reveals exactly how committed to documentary is Canada's largest publisher. In their catalogue, New Books for 1967, they list fourteen documentary outrages to be published within the first six months of 1967, as against three novels. Their format and pricing--for the most part--is uniform. These books appear as both two dollar and fifty cent paperback and five dollar hardbound editions immediately upon publication.

The books are very cheaply produced. The quality of the paper is only slightly above that of newsprint, and a few readings will usually crack the glued binding and cause paper to fall out. Only the most inexperienced book buyer would believe McClelland and Stewart when they tell us, "A great deal of attention is paid to physical appearance, and you will find our books among the best produced in this country."[41]

Glance at the publisher's promotion for a few of these books. The diversity of the topics is obvious; but in each case McClelland and Stewart tries to convince us that there is both a tremendous need for this true understanding of the situation, and that the author is knowledgeable and sincere. It is this last tactic that receives most of the skill of the copywriter. For, we are told, this is "More than just a catalogue of books, this is also a catalogue of authors--people you will be hearing and reading about a lot this year. They will appear in your homes on television and radio, and you will read reviews of their work in newspapers and magazines. We stress authors because we believe they are our most important citizens."[42]

It seems that publishers who want to make money must concentrate on documentary literature. So, for that matter, must authors. Non-fiction books, in general, earn more than novels. The average non-fiction book brings its author $3,800 while the average fiction writer in Canada earns only $1,800 a year from all his writing efforts.[43]

In an "International Symposium on the Short Story" run by the Kenyon Review in the winter of 1968, Canadian Hugh Hood spoke, he believed, for most Canadian writers of short pieces:

It does seem as if demand for the story had about dried up. Thirty years ago, even the mass-circulation magazines would run good stories. Esquire, Collier's, The Saturday Evening Post, Atlantic, Harper's, Scribner's, and several others would pay large fees for stories and present them to enormous audiences. In a reversal of the trend Playboy recently increased its payment per short story from about $1,000 to $3,000. Where are they now? If they still exist, they run fact-fiction or straight documentary.[44] Publishers won't consider collections of stories, which are notorious money-losers. The story-writer should switch to documentary, where his command of language and his traditional attachment to social fact will place him in the first rank.[45]

Likewise have Canadian magazines of literary criticism been forced to take notice of this new literature. In 1966, Canadian Literature (30) introduced a critical section for "popular" books to be called "The Verge." The announcement said: "Every year there are many books published in Canada which are hard to classify, and among them are a fair number which have something to say about the world in which the real writer lives, and therefore deserve to go not entirely unnoticed.[46]

It seems at times as if publishers and authors alike think only in terms of sales figures. And yet for the writer of documentaries there is much justification in the preoccupation. Sales can be used to gauge the extent of influence. A good illustration can be seen in the way Isabel LeBourdais thought of sales of The Trial of Steven Truscott. During the height of her campaign to free Steven, she said

to an interviewer: "If the book sells 175 thousand copies and Steven is still in jail, I don't know how I could go on."[47]

Many books that sell well will be unreadable for succeeding ages; but while they may gather dust on library

TABLE 1

SALES IN CANADA OF TWENTY BOOKS DESIGNED TO APPEAL TO ENGLISH-CANADIANS

Author and Title	Sales Figures	
	Paper	Cloth
Berton, Pierre. *The Big Sell*	25,000	6,000
--------. *The Confortable Pew*	134,775[a]	8,099[a]
--------. *The Mysterious North*		9,000
--------. *The Snug Minority*	75,000[f]	2,000[f]
LeBourdais, Isabel. *The Trial of Steven Truscott*	60,775[a]	6,581[a]
Coriolis. *Death Here Is Thy Sting*	4,000	1,000
Gordon, Walter. *A Choice for Canada*....	15,421[a]	1,186[a]
Grant, George. *Lament for a Nation*	7,000	4,000
Harrison, Ernest. *A Church Without God*	8,000[e]	1,000
Kilbourn, William. *The Restless Church*	16,000[e]	1,000
McClement, Fred. *It Doesn't Matter Where You Sit*	4,000	1,000
Minifie, James M. *Peacemaker or Powder-monkey*	13,000	8,000
Mowat, Farley. *The Curse of the Viking Grave*		5,000
--------. *The Desperate People*		7,381[a]
--------. *Lost in the Barrens*		32,000
--------. *Never Cry Wolf*	. .[d]	21,331[a]
--------. *People of the Deer*	25,000	6,000
Neatby, Hilda. *So Little for the Mind*..	. .[d]	14,799[b]
Newman, Peter. *Renegade in Power*	43,000	28,000
Porter, John. *The Vertical Mosaic*	25,000[c]	

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Notes:

All books were published in English by Canadian Publishers in the period 1953 to 1968.

Except as noted below, all sales figures are accurate within 1000 copies from publication to December 31, 1967; and were obtained from McClelland and Stewart Limited. (C. L. Howe to William Stocks, May 27, 1968.)

[a]Sales figures are exact and were obtained from McClelland and Stewart Limited. (J. Jerman to William Stocks, April 2, 1968.)

[b]Sales figures are exact and were obtained from Miss Hilda Neatby. (Hilda Neatby to William Stocks, April 2, 1968.)

[c]Paper and cloth figures are combined. (Source may be unreliable.) ("MacLean's Interviews John Porter", 9.)

[d]Sales figures unavailable for paperback edition.

[e]Figure includes remaindered copies.

[f]Sales figures are from publication, February 1, 1968 to April 30, 1968.

shelves, they will have left a lasting impression in the minds of their readers, and will have been etched deeply into a national consciousness. The measure of such effect may, in fact, be judged by examination of the sales figures.[48] Table 1 is such a list of sales figures for twenty Canadian books, fiction and non-fiction. To put this information into some perspective, it is interesting to note that in Canada,

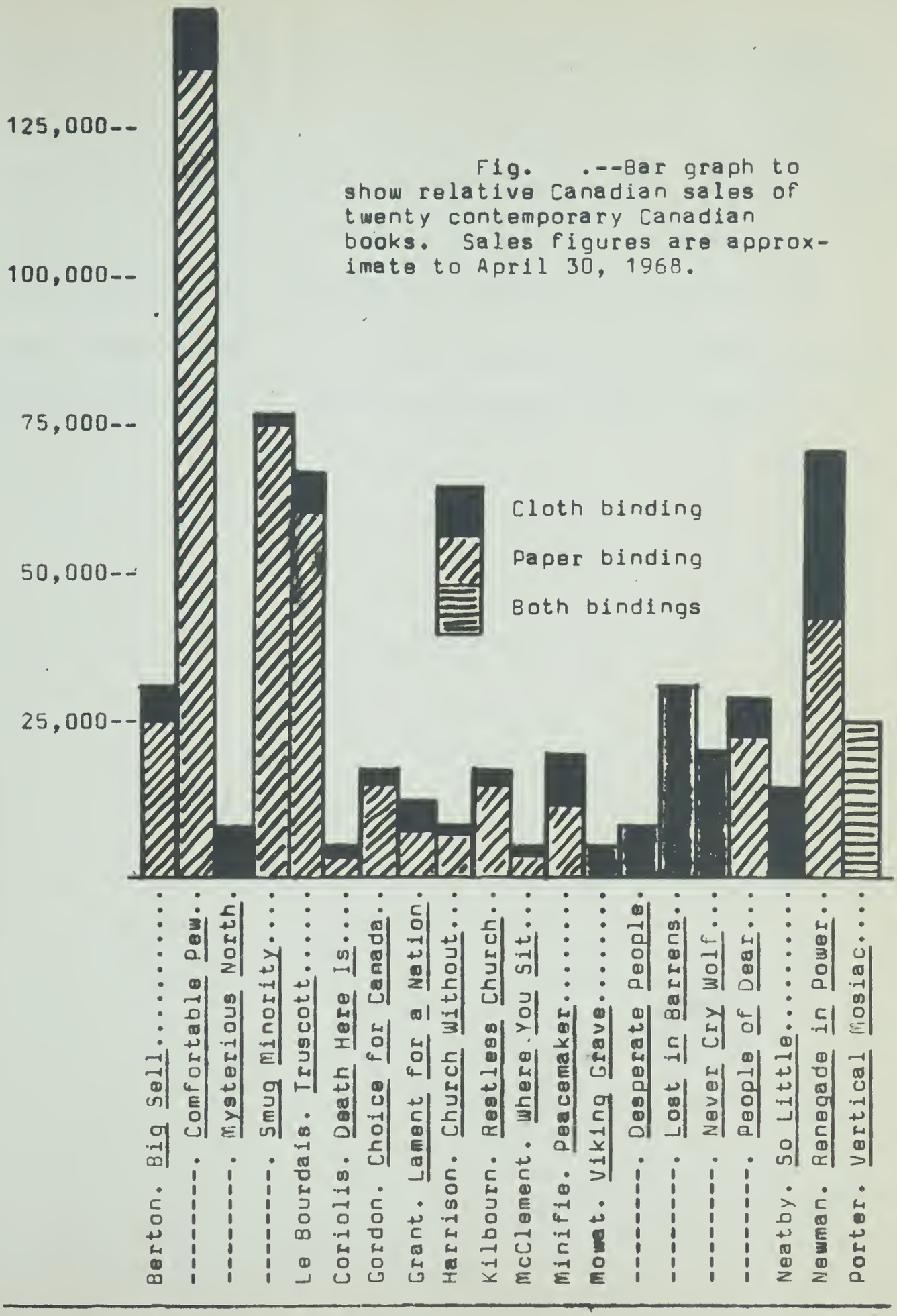

Fig. .--Bar graph to show relative Canadian sales of twenty contemporary Canadian books. Sales figures are approximate to April 30, 1968.

Source: Adapted from Table 1.

on the average hard cover, sales of four to five thousand will recoup production costs, and sales of seven to eight thousand can be classed as a moderate success. Sales in the range of fifty thousand can usually class the book as a "best seller".[49] (Although it must be realized that the term "best seller" is a misleading term often applied by the publisher himself to give lagging book sales a boost.)

III

FARLEY MOWAT AND "OPERATION ESKIMO"

1. The Public Life of Farley Mowat

Mowat began his writing career in 1951 while living in a tent pitched inside a half-finished log cabin he was building on ten swampy acres near Palgrave, Ontario. At this time he said: "There are no mortgage worries when you build your own house."[1] (He later said: "When I finally finished that damn house, I refused to lift my hand to an axe or shovel ever again."[2]

He had returned from the north with a new wife and was determined to survive on the proceeds of his writing. His first sale was an account of Eskimo starvation, sold to the Saturday Evening Post for $750 and on the strength of that success he went on to write his first documentary novel People of the Deer. The amazing controversy he generated lead him into what he called Operation Eskimo, which was to last for three years.

Since that time he has written seventeen more books, made his name, beard and kilt--not to mention his outrageous

behaviour--known over the world. He is also, as Weekend Magazine puts it, "the most successful author in Canada today."[3] Mowat's 1968 earnings from broadcasting, royalties and advances were "around $48,000,"[4] (which probably satisfies Weekend's criteria of Success). His books have been translated into twelve languages and have sold over a million and a half copies in their American editions alone.[5] The Russian translations have sold over "a half a million copies."[6]

When he first began writing, Mowat announced that Canadian writers "must recognize the fact that their market is the world--and not Canada,"[7] if they are to survive. Well, Mowat has survived. Radio and television networks, book clubs and major magazines over the world have presented selections from or condensations of many of Mowat's books. Public furors created by his books have forced legislation in Russia and in Canada. He has received seven major awards, including the Governor General and Stephen Leacock Awards, and his writing has been the subject of several theses and scholarly articles.

But Mowat, in characteristic fashion, pretends not to abide such recognition. To the Twenty-third Annual Leacock Dinner[8] he announced that awards are useless unless accompan-

ied by money, and responded to a question from the audience by pulling up his kilt and revealing a bare bottom.[9]

He "guzzled" a bottle of rum while being presented with his honorary doctorate at Laurentian University [10] and returned his Canadian Centennial Medal to Judy LaMarsh (then Secretary of State) with the words "You know what you can do with this." She replied, "I thought of it first; you stuff it."[11]

It is, however, no accident that Mowat is the clown of Canadian letters. He maintains the most over-dramatized, outrageously arbitrary--and at times contradictory--facade since that of Oscar Wilde, or perhaps Dylan Thomas, on their respective American tours. As Mowat says, "These are my public images: drunkard, homosexual, subversive, anarchist!"[12]

Certainly Mowat has fun performing. As he once said, "I enjoy a certain modicum of infamy."[13] But the justification for his act is more than just fun. As his publisher and close friend Jack McClelland says, "The author today who is able to be self-promoting has got it made."[14]

Mowat seems only too happy to be "self-promoting." His face appears as frequently as he can arrange it, in whatever guise will attract the most attention. As he says,

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"There are two me's--the guy who likes books and lives in that world, and the other guy who sells Farley Mowat--the fellow who takes his pants down in public."[15] And Mowat means this quite literally. MacLean's editor reports having seen him on three separate occasions, come to parties wearing a kilt, and at some point during the evening, pull down his underwear, roll it up in a ball and throw it in the face of the most frigid, shockable girl at the party.[16]

Certainly Mowat is at his best when on a book promotion tour. He overwhelms columnists and interviewers with his opinions (one Vancouver columnist called Mowat "the famed kilt with a mouth."[17]), and kisses, pinches and molests--with his rummy breath--any woman who comes within range. A bookstore autograph party or a guest "spot" on a radio open-line talk show provides Mowat with ideal self-promotional opportunities. Mowat is the radio talk show moderator's dream. Deftly selecting the desired image for the moment, he begins: "Pierre Trudeau is 103 years old...a cardboard machine...a self-made hoax."[18] and a thousand coffee-logged housewives prepare serious words in case their call goes "on the air."

Of course there must be another Farley Mowat somewhere who is not running from party to party, continually drunk. Mowat is Canada's most prolific author, and one of Canada's

best. To produce so much valuable work requires that most of the year he spend in absolute isolation. He makes his home in small or isolated towns and goes to great lengths to guarantee his privacy. (He tells of thwarting potential visitors to his Palgrave, Ontario, home with "Danger: Radioactivity" signs.[19])

Perhaps in Mowat's carefully prepared--but spontaneous--public role-playing lies the defense that has saved him from becoming too affected by adulation. He will never "give in" and do quite what the public wants him to do and be what the public wants him to be. He performs, certainly; but in his own way and in such a contradictory manner that it is impossible to say this is "The" Farley Mowat. The last critic who tried, ended up with this question: "Is he a nettlesome melancholic brooding needlessly upon the ultimate destruction of mankind seeking solace in the championship of the downtrodden?"[20]

Mowat was born in Belleville, Ontario, May 2, 1921, the only child of the former Helen Thomson and librarian Angus McGill Mowat. The family moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in 1929, where, Mowat told an interviewer from the Wilson Library Bulletin, he "lived in various libraries and began his informal education at age eight, reading Rabelais

behind the stacks."[21]

It is impossible to discover what Mowat-the-child was like, because Mowat-the-man has created such a myth about his youth that fantasy and actuality mix. In his autobiographical works The Dog Who Wouldn't Be and Owls in the Family, he presents a vision of his childhood as a kind of responsible spontaneity. Mowat-the-child plays and learns not about the real world, but about the Canadian dream world of beautiful animals and friendly nature. The adults, Mowat's uncle and father, live in their personal reality which they do not either force upon anyone or require anyone to understand.

Yet Mowat's uncle and father give him the interests that motivate his life. Through his father Mowat comes to love the sea. In The Dog Who Wouldn't Be, Mowat shows us his father who dreams constantly of sailing and in one ridiculous passage is depicted as struggling toward the sea. In The Boat Who Wouldn't Float Mowat continues his father's comic relationship with the sea, and in his five other books and hundreds of articles about the sea he continues this exploration in depth. Through his uncle Mowat comes to love the North. The trip he takes to the Barrens in 1935 (he is on a bird watching expedition with his uncle) changes him utterly and motivates a life-long interest as shown by the bulk of

Mowat's writing.

In 1939 Mowat joined the Canadian Army, which sent him overseas until 1945. (He claims to have been promoted to Captain and demoted to Lieutenant four times.) In the Spring of 1946 he returned to the North: "I wished to escape into the quiet sanctuaries where the echoes of war had never been."[22] It is here Mowat finds his race of perfect people--but too late for them or him because they are dying. And, as Mowat is to express in his book about them, their death can be seen as a metaphor for our death. Mowat has always professed what seems to be a sincere belief that our existence will soon end, although his last estimate was not too accurate. (In 1960, ten years was Mowat's "conservative estimate" of the time it would take western civilization to reach its doom.[23])

Farley McGill Mowat has a bright red beard (he is known in Newfoundland as Mowat the Red[24]--although perhaps for his views as well as his beard), blue eyes and "mouse" coloured hair. He is five feet eight inches in height and his weight has gone up from 140 pounds in 1961 to 170 pounds in 1969.[25] (His stomach hangs out over his belt.)

Mowat, in interviews, frequently expresses his fear of being possessed by women: "I'm an eater. My women--I love

them but most of the time I'm eating them...I've got to prove to them that they're wrong, they're inadequate."[26] What in public life becomes a retaliation, a defensive attack, becomes in Mowat's very public life--his books--an excuse for either ignoring them completely, tolerating them when they provide some service, or using them for grotesque sexual jokes. (Grandmother sitting on a toilet filled with dying catfish in Never Cry Wolf comes to mind.)

For Mowat's view of self is framed in a world of men, living in a world of Nature--natural men of the North and natural men of the Sea. And in his attempt to demonstrate publicly how the self changes, he offers himself as a metaphor of change. He shows the perversion of the city by becoming obscene; he shows the North's challenge to self by becoming serene.

His publications are, after all, a record of his development--a continuing version of his personal reality. His war experiences provided the material for The Regiment (1955). People of the Deer and The Desperate People (1959) chronicled the successes and failures of "Operation Eskimo," Mowat's campaign to extend the Canadian consciousness Northward. (This campaign is the subject of the second half of this chapter.)

Never Cry Wolf (1963) is a humorous documentary berating the Canadian government for its acceptance of "easy answers," and championing the cause of the wolf--and by extension, all animals. Lost in the Barrens (1956) is a juvenile fiction concerning young boys who make personal ecological discoveries. Its sequel, The Curse of the Viking Grave, is very poorly written (although Mowat, to do him justice, is ashamed of it). Ordeal by Ice (1960) and The Polar Passion (1967) are magnificently researched and illustrated adaptations of the journals of early Canadian explorers. Coppermine Journey (1958) is an edited account of Samuel Hearne's journals. Canada North (1967) is a Centennial Anthology containing selections from Mowat's previous writing about the North.

The Dog Who Wouldn't Be (1957) and its sequel Owls in the Family (1961) are probably Mowat's best books. Both are humorous autobiographies of Mowat's youth and both are clearly Mowat's most successful books, financially and artistically. The Boat Who Wouldn't Float (1969) is the humorous autobiography of some of Mowat's adult experiences; it is not terribly humorous.

Grey Seas Under (1958) and The Serpent's Coil (1961) are very exciting documentary adventures of deep-sea salvage

off the Newfoundland Coast. The Black Joke (1962) is a dull and superficial juvenile fiction, a pirate story placed off the Newfoundland Coast. In 1965, Mowat wrote the massive documentary-history, West Viking; Early Norse Exploration to Canada. The documentary outrage The Rock Within the Sea was published in 1968. It details the plight of men of the Newfoundland outports, forced from their homes by the Smallwood government. It contains many photographs, important to the images Mowat creates with his prose.

But Mowat does not limit his literary output to books, nor his ideas to those expressed in his books. His strong anti-American sentiment is a good example. Rarely does Mowat give an interview (and in Mowat's case an interview is in many ways an artistic achievement) without mentioning Canadian-United States relations.

In a recent MacLean's interview he said, "Like an old-fashioned Greek, I would die almost happily-physically fighting the Yanks invading my country."[27] He has written fourteen magazine articles ("Greed for the Yankee Dollar," and "Let's Get Tough with the U.S.A.," and the satirical "Let's Apply for Admission as the Fifty-First State,"--which was taken seriously by many readers of the MacLean's article), pamphlets for the "Fair-play for Cuba Committee," and at

least four television documentaries--all on Canadian-United States relations.

His interest in the sea has provided material for dozens of articles in Argosy and Yachting, and for his CBC-TV programs "Portraits from the Sea" and "Harvest of the Sea." He has written about the craft of writing in What Children Want in Books and How to be a Canadian Writer and Survive, plus many reviews of other author's works.

Mowat is an amazingly prolific writer. He has produced hundreds of radio and television programs, National Film Board script, and magazine articles about every conceivable subject; everything from Mowat's plan for the new world he hopes to bring about, to a one-half hour television program about a child in a field on a hot summer day. (Although one reason Mowat writes so much is that he re-uses so much of his material. What appears unique is usually derived from one of his books or books-to-be.)

Mowat lends his name to any cause with which he is in sympathy. He is a member of the Fair-Play for Cuba Committee, The Committee for Canadian Independence (formed as a result of Minifie's book Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey[28]), The Canadian Wolf Defender's Society, The International Campaign to Save the Whale, The Newfoundland Revolutionary Society and probably

many other pressure groups.

Mowat's willingness to defend values in which he believes can be illustrated by an incident which occurred a few years ago that caused him and his wife to abandon their home. The great controversy around the "Burgeo Whale" began when an eighty-ton fin whale was trapped in a tidal pool near the isolated Newfoundland town of Burgeo, where Mowat and his wife had lived for five years. The whale had been used as target practice by local residents until Mowat asked the RCMP to step in. It had been shot "at least 500 times" with high-powered rifles, but "still appeared friendly",[29] Mowat reported. Mowat was determined to save the whale's life. But in his attempt to feed the whale and provide it with needed attention, he antagonized each one of his neighbours in the isolated Newfoundland outpost.

Mowat attracted world-wide attention to his neighbours' abuse of this helpless and intelligent animal; but despite tons of food and medical supplies that were flown in for the whale, the animal died. Mowat's attention had not helped the whale; it had only created personal problems for Mowat and his family. Mowat was profoundly affected by the whale's death. As he said: "I haven't cried about anything for years--but when that whale died I wept, I couldn't stop my-

self. The sense of personal loss was so great."[30]

It is tempting to regard Mowat as a Cu Chulainn fighting the waves, but perhaps better, the words he wrote about the dog, Mutt, might be applied to the author himself: "Wherever he went he left deep-etched memories that were alternately vivid with the screaming hues of outrage or cloudy with the muddy colours of near dementia."[31] For Mowat is becoming a symbol in himself: a symbol of man's uncompromising clarity of view. If what Mowat does outrages, it is because, we tell ourselves, he has no fear of blasting myths, no fear of living in an honest world; and perhaps we will soon do the same.

2. Operation Eskimo

People of the Deer was Mowat's first book, and it was written in his log cabin in Palgrave, Ontario. It was the initial work in a series of documentaries that he hoped would outrage the Canadian public into taking action to improve the deplorable state of the Canadian Eskimo. As he says: "When I first went to the Arctic and first saw Eskimos, I was so appalled by the conditions under which they were being treated by us that I had to do something about it. So I fought this great battle to destroy the influence of the missions, the

Hudson's Bay Company and the RCMP--the old orders of the North, I called them."[32] Mowat achieved this by writing two books and one hundred articles and radio and television programs. He called this project "Operation Eskimo," and it ran for three years. Celebrating what is clearly a victory for the documentary method, Mowat says "I didn't bring about the changes personally, but I stirred up the pot to the point that changes had to take place."[33]

One of the most enduring myths of Canadian society is that of one's relation to his neighbour. The physical climate of Canada demands that men help one another. One must be able to count on his fellows because survival so often depends upon such cooperation. And as Susanna Moody discovered early in Canada's literary history, there is immense power generated by images of outrage based on this myth.

Imagine the most Christ-like men possible: men who are not only your neighbours, but men who preceded you; men who would never retaliate for injuries you have caused them; and who would always give of themselves, and anything they possess, just for the asking.

Yet these same men now desperately need your help so that they may extricate themselves from a doom you have caused. While such action is easily done, you refuse to even

consider it. This is the symbolic argument of Farley Mowat's People.[34]

Mowat casts People into the rough framework of the more conventional novel of self-discovery. The book begins with Mowat's evaluation of his present state, why he wants to go North, and what he expects to find there (when a child he was initiated into a few of the mysteries). Mowat then tells how coincidence and good fortune guide him to those who can make his journey possible; and good luck enables him to land where he can begin. But in order for the story to take on the trappings of the novel of self-discovery, Mowat must deviate from fact. (Mowat really went to Nueltin Lake as a junior member of a well-organized expedition led by Dr. F. Harper and financed by the Arctic Institute of North America.[35])

As the book progresses we learn what Mowat learns by a process in which Mowat is skilled. There is first the evidence to which Mowat reacts as his reader would react. Then comes the realization that a new way of looking at this evidence is required (a new reality must be developed) if Mowat (and the reader) are to make proper sense of this information. For example, early in the book when Mowat experiences his first killing of the deer, we are treated to a "sight of

slaughter and of horror, and the knowledge that each of the dying beasts was swollen with young, did not make the bloody spectacle easier to bear" (62).

Mowat leaves his reader to consider this horror, a few pages later to treat them to the sight of thousands upon thousands of deer: "The surface of the bay, for six miles east and west, had become one undulating mass of animals, and still they came" (66). The "discovery" or new way of seeing comes to Mowat: "I thought of the twelve deer slaughtered on the banks of Windy River and I no longer felt horror or disgust. I felt nothing for the dead who were drowned beyond memory in this living flow of blood that swept across the plains" (67). Mowat has realized that the death of the individual is of no account if there are considerable members of the species to continue life. (Thus the outrage generated by People is not at one individual of the Eskimo tribe being killed--but at every member being killed off.)

In another example, Mowat tells us about the Eskimo's tents. He speaks of:

> great, gaping slits which outline each hide on the frame of a tent. Such a home offers hardly more shelter than a thicket of trees...these feeble excuses for homes...the eternal winds pour into the tent and dissipate what little heat the fire can spare from the cook-pots...The hides hang slackly on their poles while rivulets pour through the tent to drench everything inside...hordes of bloodsucking and flesh-eating

flies...find that the Ihalmiut tents offer no barrier to their invasion. (126-127)

So Mowat "wondered if the Ihalmiut were as clever and as resourceful as I thought them to be" (127). Then he shares with us the discovery he makes: "It took me long to realize that the people not only have good homes, but that they have devised the one perfect home" (127). That perfect home is, of course, the clothing that is adapted to the "merciless plain of the Barrens" (127). And from this episode comes the general principle of ecology that to live with nature one does not level it, rather one adjusts oneself to go with it. (The theme of Mowat's entirely successful juvenile novel, Lost in the Barrens.)

Mowat proceeds into the wilderness carrying all the errors resulting from false reality--and will emerge with a new vision, a new reality, to sustain him. Yet to Canadians this is not a new method of re-setting sights. As W.L. Norton says in his The Canadian Identity: "This alternate penetration of the wilderness and return to civilization is the basic thythm of Canadian life, and forms the basic elements of Canadian character...Even in an industrial and urban society, the old rhythm continues, for the typical Canadian holiday is a wilderness holiday."[36]

Mowat begins his journey in the wilderness burdened down with all the white man's hangups: Guilt at having plenty in a land of starvation (83), the white man's ego ("why the devil couldn't they find clean clothes to wear," asks Mowat on page 87), and failure to see beauty in nature--falling back on old urban ideas of beauty (89). Yet Mowat learns to overcome these false notions of life his culture has given him; all except one, because Mowat does not learn to trust (he does learn to chronicle and thus becomes a literary success, but a failure as a man). And, we see by the "tests" that Mowat puts us through that we have not learned to trust either, and that we are failures as men!

Here is one example of such a test. With great sincerity and intellectual belief, Mowat tells us of the Eskimo's perfect communal system of ownership; but when it comes to their quite justifiably running off with Mowat's rifle (187), Mowat is angered and we cannot help but find ourself angered along with Mowat. Perhaps the best example of Mowat's "test the reader" technique is when Mowat has Ohoto describe starving Eskimos crawling into the camp of the white trader who does not understand the seriousness of their condition. (145-148) Although we expect the Eskimos to take what they need by force (as we raised on violence would do), they calmly

walk away not even bearing a grudge (as we reared on revenge would do).

In the Eskimo, Mowat has created the man perfectly adapted for survival in the physical world, who has achieved harmony with his brothers. This is Mowat's perfect man, the man who, as Mowat is fond of saying, "significantly thinks with the back of his brain and not the front"[37], a man who operates on the instinctual level--not on the intellectual.

This explains the practical significance of the mass of material in People devoted to legends, ghosts, devils and spirits. As Mowat says: "the demons do represent real and potential evils, and so they are not without value" (272). Mowat intends to cause doubt in the reader that his sense of reality is the only one: Mowat is cured of stomach pain by magical means, as is Ohoto cured of the abscess on his cheek. The message to the reader is: just possibly magic works.

Since all civilized men seem to carry a sub-conscious belief in magic, every reader can share the foreboding when Ohoto's father warns of the forthcoming death of his people (301), and every reader can share in discovery of the legendary time when "all men and animals spoke the same tongue and were brothers" (249).

The cancer inflicting the Eskimo band can best be seen

in the person of Kakumee. So that none can escape the significance of this man, Mowat offers a physical description of Kakumee as death (202-203), and says about Kakumee, "His life is also the tragedy of his race" (201). Mowat jolts us back to the new reality when he describes Kakumee murdering out of fear for his wealth--something we can understand. Kakumee, of course, brings a fatal disease back from the land of the white man which spreads through his people, the disease of materialism.

The theme of People is the most basic of all themes: man's relation to other men. Unquestionably, Mowat reveals his mould for our life in his picture of "natural" man, the Eskimo, leading a "natural" life. The Eskimo is the perfect picture of Christ-like humility and forgiveness. Even in gambling, the winner returns the loser's losses at the end of the game. The Eskimo is the perfect picture of Ruskin's craftsman who so loves his labour he makes beautiful things; the man who is perfectly in tune with his environment. There is almost a vision of a lost glory in Mowat's description of the Eskimo's sense of beauty:

> They know how to make beauty, and they also know how to enjoy it--for it is no uncommon thing to see an Ihalmio man squatting silently on a hill crest and watching, for hours at a time, the swift interplay of colors that sweep the sky at sun-

set and dawn. It is not unusual to see an Ihalmio pause for long minutes to watch the sleek beauty of a weasel or to stare into the brilliant heart of some minuscule flower. And these things are done quite unconsciously, too. There is no word for "beauty"--as such--in their language; it needs no words in their hearts. (164)

And their attunement is not just emotional but also rational; or more properly, the perfect entwinement of the two. This can be seen in the relationship of adult to child. (It is interesting that Mowat is seen as a child by the "developed" Eskimos.) When Mowat (in his guise of Mr. White Urban Canadian) asks why Ihalmiut children are never beaten, he is told: "Who but a madman would raise his hand against blood of his blood?...Who but a madman would, in his man's strength, stoop to strike the weakness of a child?" (156)

The process by which Ihalmiut educate their young, and the relationship they have devised between people (reduced by Mowat to "great laws of the land") present the ideal--obviously ideal--state in which man should live. After establishing the Eskimo way of life as the perfect synthesis of emotion and reason, Mowat then can easily explain away our "favourite bogeys," the "missionaries' charges" against the Eskimo, of murder, infanticide, and sexual promiscuity.

The reader of Mowat's book reaches such intensity of

outrage because Mowat carefully prepares the final ironic shock so that it contains as many components of irony as is possible. We are so outraged at the treatment accorded the people of the deer, because they are the kind of people who least deserve such treatment. Certainly, we would be outraged at the violation of any man, but when the man violated is one whom we instinctively feel we will some day emulate, we are greatly outraged.

By somewhat similar technique, so the death of the caribou may take on greater importance, Mowat describes how the land once was, in terms of the Biblical creation of life. The caribou are "a tide of life" which "engulfed the world" (v). He speaks of "the essential spark," and "the all-embracing flood" (v), evoking the image of primeval agelessness. The caribou are a "river of life" (6) upon a dark "inanimate and brute crust of rock" (v).

Then, in passing, Mowat mentions "the immense herds of the prairie buffalo" (68), and ten pages later begins his tale of the utter destruction of the caribou, this incredible life force. He evokes the image of the buffalo now with special purpose: "You have heard all this before. Possibly you heard it in connection with the buffalo and the Southern Plains Indians, but that was a century ago. That was in the

time of your father's father. Listen to what I tell you anyway, for I am speaking of what happened in your time, and is still happening" (78).

Mowat prepares us for the final outrage with a series of small contributory ironic situations. We learn on page 121 of the great generosity of the Ihalmiut. Speaking of their utter generosity, Mowat says: "As a white man I unconsciously refused it to both Ohoto and Ootek times without number, but never did they feel the need to retaliate by withdrawing any of the privileges of the relationship they had so freely extended to me" (121).

But then what do white men do to reward such consistency? Rather than being told from a defensive white man's point of view, we hear demands put to us by calm Ohoto: "Why is it you white men should come for a time, stay for a time, and then suddenly vanish when we are most in need of your help? Why is it? Why can we not take our fox pelts to the trader and have shells for our guns in return, for this is what the trader taught us to do. The mystery I cannot understand..." (139).

This ironic undercutting leads to the situation where three Eskimo men near death from starvation reach the igloo of a trader. The narration is again from Ohoto's point of

view. First the expectation is clearly outlined: "My legs gave way beneath me and I fell in the snow, yet I did not care for I knew we were safe" (144-145). So the white trader would understand their predicament, Ohoto tells us:

> I lay down again in the snow and closed my eyes like a dead man...When we showed him we had no foxes, the white man suddenly grew very angry and I thought that perhaps he had not understood why we came. Again and again we tried to show what our need was, and again and again we lifted our parkas so he could see the bones of our bodies. But something was wrong, and he did not understand. (145)

Yet, we can understand what is going on. When Ohoto then explains away the white man's actions and leaves still starving, we the readers are outraged at the action of the trader, and at similar actions we may have performed in our own past. What must be revealed is the inner state of the white man and his civilization. This is the basis of the outrage; this is the realization it demands from its reader.

One object of Mowat's attack is the trader, or more specifically, "one large trading concern." (Mowat later reported he did not name the Hudson's Bay Company for fear of libel suit.) But the other major object of Mowat's attack is the Federal government. To build up to the scene where the Canadian government supplies the starving Eskimo with white beans: "sacks of white beans, for people who had no fuel for fires and whose world was still one of ice and snow" (58),

Mowat first shows Franz's sudden decision to (finally) help the people. The irony builds through Franz's long wait (where Mowat makes several feeble excuses for the relief not arriving) to the final irony of Franz travelling "over a hundred miles to find the cache" (58), which consisted of white beans. Thus the pattern of government simply not caring (or being blind or stupid if they do care) is created. And this view of the government is intensified when Mowat, on page 111, shows how horribly treated are the Indians who <u>were</u> helped by the government: "They are a passive, beaten, hopeless people who wait miserably for death."

The Eskimo is portrayed as being incredibly naive about the limitations of the white man's world. Clearly for ironic effect, he is heard throughout the book to ask why the white man treats him so unthinkingly, so uncaringly. As to why the government acts this way; the reader is forced to puzzle out that question for himself. When he sees the directors of his world--business and government--so out of touch with the important things in life--the earth and the men who inhabit it; ideally he should be converted to a new reality. In the most profound sense, an ecological reality. As Mowat observes about the Eskimo (and illustrates with one of his favourite metaphors, sailing): "They have bridged the

barriers of their land not by levelling them, as we would try to do, but by conforming to them. It is like the difference between a sailing vessel and one under power, when you compare an Ihalmio and a white traveller, in the Barrens" (85).

Mowat has great skill of description. In a lyric frenzy he carries his reader away with him. One such scene is when the ice goes out on the river near the cabin and Mowat powerfully describes the awakening of the land and the "forces which the land contains" (42). Parallelled with this image is Mowat's awakening, and by extension, the awakening of the reader.

The feast at the Ihalmiut camp (beginning on page 88) is another excellent example of Mowat's skill of description. It succeeds as a technique contrasting Mowat's artificiality and inflexibility with the Eskimo's open and adaptive manner; and Mowat's slavery to rules, with the Eskimo's freedom from them. This scene also introduces a great amount of factual detail (so much so as to be convincing of Mowat's authenticity). It functions as an alternative to the scene of starvation which follows, and makes this scene more dramatic.

Change of point of view has many advantages. For Mowat to reveal that all the musk oxen have been killed is not nearly as effective as that same information released

from the point of view of the Eskimo. His tone is one of passive acceptance of fate--almost requiring a feeling of outrage from the reader, particularly because this integration comes immediately after a detailed telling of the joy of the musk oxen hunt: "Only twice in my life have I, Ohoto, seen Omingmuk alive; for when the time came that the Kiktoriaktormiut were gone from the gates of the land, the musk oxen were already gone" (313).

Mowat uses many techniques to induce believability into his work. There are drawings and there is a map on the end papers. Sensual description helps, particularly in the case of the caribou. They have the "barnyard smell of cattle" which would seem to be something which probably never occurred to most readers, yet once they read about it, it would make good sense. Other details are the sound of the caribou: "belly-rumblings and castanet-like clatter of their feet," and "one noisy knot of rampant indigestion" (69). These are little details obvious to anyone who had lived through the experience but which, or so a reader thinks, no one could have thought up.

There are many fine comic moments in People. There is the comic equivalent of the tragic government mishandling of important tasks. Thus Mowat was made to take an utterly use-

less "hundred pound crate of smoke generators" (21) on his trip. Another comic incident involved Ohoto's misinterpretation of the use of Mowat's mouse traps. (This scene is expanded into a much richer comic scene in Never Cry Wolf.)

There is, at the end of People a passage that provides the justification for the book, and for the documentary process:

> I have spoken of the debt I owe the People, and this debt alone would prevent me from accepting oblivion as the answer to the problem of what we shall do with our arctic races. Because I refuse to accept this answer I have written a book in an attempt to give form and substance to the voices which spoke to me from the graying rock heaps under Kinetua. The People lent me their eyes so that I might see what has been hidden from white men. Now I, in turn, have lent the People my voice so that the white men might hear the words the Ihalmiut cannot speak for themselves. (327)

Thus Mowat the chronicler is born. And not just a chronicler, for in the epilogue (in contrast to the prologue which was about the springtime surge of life and light) Mowat speaks of death (death of men and death of their land and its animals). But then he satisfies the documentary expectation of a solution. He offers a suggestion to the problem that is by "no means the nebulous and rosy visions of an idealistic dreamer. For the most part they are originally not even my own ideas, but have been propounded by men who are more competent than I am to understand the dilemmas which face us in the Arctic"

(339). Then as proof that there can be a solution, he points to the example of Greenland.

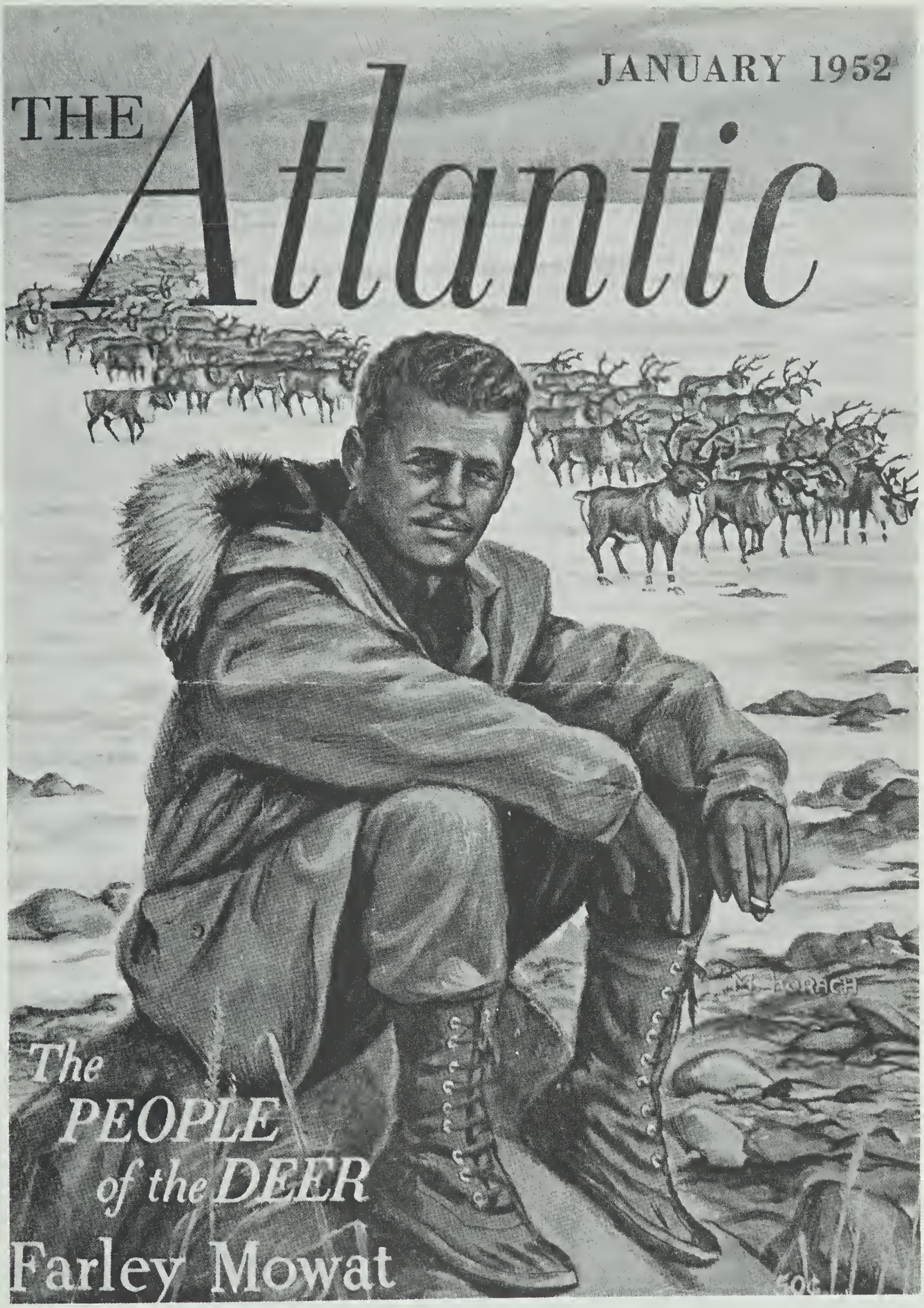
Detractors of a documentary will refute the book's conclusions by attempting to disprove the "facts" upon which the conclusion is based. Since Mowat placed most blame upon the Canadian government and the Hudson's Bay Company, it is to be expected that they would lead the criticism.

The Bay reacted sharply before the book was published. The editor of the Beaver (the Bay's prestigious journal of the Canadian north) read the three-part condensation of People serialized in Atlantic and discovered an error in one of Mowat's references to "a well-known trading company." Mowat had somehow learned of an advertisement in Bay outposts offering Indians so much per pound for dried deer's tongue. In typical "I write truth not fact" style, Mowat telescoped this information into the following:

> As recently as the 1920's one outpost of the world-famous trading concern actually encouraged the sale of tremendous quantities of ammunition to the Northern Indians by offering to buy all the deer tongues that were brought in! Many thousands of dried deer tongues passed through that post, while many thousands of carcasses stripped only of their tongues, remained to rot in the spring thaws. (78-79)

As the editor of the Beaver said:

> That certainly looks pretty bad--and the R.C.M.P. thought so too, back in 1939 (not "the 1920's")...Investigations were started; government game departments were alerted; and the


JANUARY 1952
THE Atlantic
The PEOPLE of the DEER
Farley Mowat

fever of indignation mounted...So there were some red faces in evidence when it was discovered that the contraband goods were simply the dried leaves of a plant called "deer's tongue", which grows in the north, and is used for flavouring tobacco.[38]

Admittedly, Mowat went too far, because no documentarist wants to have his facts disclaimed. But the Beaver was not the only magazine confused by Mowat's declared factual basis. John Nicol, in Canadian Forum accused Mowat of writing "with rather more heaving of the chest than is really necessary,"[39] and the reviewer in the University of Toronto Quarterly expresses his fears that People will be "shown to be only a kind of sub-arctic romance."[40]

But the scientific journals knew where to place Mowat's book on the fact-fiction scale. Clifford Wilson, writing in Canadian Historical Review, begins: "A very long review would be needed to point out all the errors and misleading statements...:"[41] Douglas Leechman, writing in the Canadian Geographic Journal was more shaken; he was "confronted by a lamentable array of sheer error in fact,"[42] and calls it an "inaccurate and prejudiced book,"[43] and a dangerous one:

Dangerous because it will give a reader who knows nothing of the subject a wrong impression...Dangerous, too, because it is in a way, well written and is likely to have a wide distribution. Dangerous again, because we have here an example of a young man, with some training in science, who has forgotten

the caution and accuracy he knows to be essential in his desire to create an effect.[44]

To understand the nature of the documentary is to be able to answer the charges brought about by these reviewers. To that end there are other comments that are worth considering. Writing in Saturday Night, D. M. LeBourdais (the husband of the author of The Trial of Steven Truscott) said this about Mowat's book: "It is possible, of course, that his picture is nearer the truth than a more objective "scientific" account might be."[45] And in a few words, George Woodcock, writing in Canadian Literature told the whole story of People: "Mowat's People of the Deer had, despite its detractors, the ring of truth."[46]

In a recent interview, Mowat said: "I never allow the facts to interfere with the truth. I write truth, not fact...if it didn't happen the way it was described in the book, it should have."[47] In this way he sets himself above the level of the scientist whose discipline binds him to faithful observation, to the level of the artist whose observation is, first of all, an inner one. Mowat uses the myth of fact-as-proof to his own end. If the only way a civilization which thinks and does not feel can be made to feel, is through horizontal, logical, thought processes--then Mowat will provide western man with the intellectual exercise.

For the writer of documentary, the end is everything, the means not subject to conventional morality. To those who claim that it is not honest to pretend scientific factuality and then produce artistic distortion, Mowat answers: "I tell it as I see it and what I think to be the truth. I long ago learned that facts are the most misleading aspects of human being's attempt to communicate. Facts are arbitrary things which don't have the flexibility of reality of life or truth. Facts have been given a value far beyond their worth."[48]

The documentarist aims to educate his readers to realize subjective, not objective reality; to liberate his readers from the tyranny of fact. Or as Mowat has said: "I think from the back of the mind and not the front." Even though a reader may realize a documentary is not factual, having been lead through the objective to the subjective reality, the reader usually does not (and cannot if he feels at all) question the conclusion the facts have brought forth. And besides, who is usually questioning the documentarists fact? The very people he seeks to destroy. Naturally those with a vested interest in maintaining the present way things are done would disclaim the validity of a new approach. And so the effect of their criticisms are lessened because their impartiality is called into question.

As for the impartiality of the documentarist, the very reason he has written what he has, is to present his outrage. He begins from a position of impartiality, but what he sees flames up his emotions into outcry at some injustice. The only counter to advertising for the old realities (which confront us daily in every media) is advertising for the new reality.

There was, however, one review that bothered Mowat. In June, 1952, the Beaver published a review of People written by a senior employee of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, Dr. A. A. Porsild. (Mowat was later to call the review "a violent attack upon my personal integrity, under the guise of a book review."[49]) Porsild found misrepresentation and distortion. He questioned Mowat's travel details, he challenged Mowat's statistics, and stated the impossibility of learning a language like Eskimo in a few months.

Porsild summed up his review in these words: "Had Mowat become permanently adopted by the 'Ihalmiut', his song-cousin, Ohoto, surely would have been in honour bound to name him 'Sagdlutorssuaq'--a most apt sobriquet--'Great Teller of Tall Tales'."[50] Mowat interpreted the review as "a deliberate attempt at character assassination," and claimed he was

presented as "a shoddy pedlar of falsehoods; a first rate charlatan."[51] In a report of the scandal that followed Mowat said:

When Dr. Porsild's review was published in the Beaver, I immediately prepared a point-by-point reply and submitted it to the editor of the magazine with complete confidence that he would publish it. I was rather naive. The editor replied that he would not be able to publish any defence of mine, and the reason he gave was that it would only lead to useless controversy.[52]

McClelland and Stewart attempted to insert Mowat's reply as a paid advertisement, but the Beaver, as a house organ, does not allow outside advertising.

Dr. Porsild went to great lengths to discredit People. Copies of the Beaver review were sent to all Canadian daily newspapers (four wrote editorials denouncing Mowat), to school boards (some had put the book on supplementary reading lists), and one copy was sent to the Ansifield-Wolf Committee, who, in 1953 made an award to People for its contribution to better human relations. Included in the review sent to the committee was this statement:

Mowat's mysterious tribe--the Ihalmiut--was created solely as a vehicle for his attack on government administration and on the wicked trader. Such a tribe does not exist. Nor is there ever a shred of evidence in support of his claim that there was such a tribe.[53]

In an attempt to defend Mowat (an intervention

justified by the unfairness of the Beaver's attitude in not publishing Mowat's reply to their many charges against him), Scott Young, the Vice-President of the Canadian Author's Association, wrote "Storm Out of the Arctic", which was published in Saturday Night on October 18, 1952. The basis of Young's defence is that Porsild is a government employee writing in the Beaver, which he says, "functions as a professional debunker of all views of the north which do not conform to the H.B.C.'s long and not entirely distinguished experiences in this area." He claims "the two agencies criticized most bitterly in the book teamed up to answer it."[54]

In the next issue Porsild replied to Scott's defence of Mowat. In this he defended his ability to remain an unbiased observer and stated again that Mowat's book

> is misleading and utterly worthless as a crusade against alleged misadministration, because the premises upon which its conclusions are built are wrong or even fictitious.... If the author of such a book, whether through ignorance or by decision is consistently wrong about his "facts", how can his conclusion be other than worthless?
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Mowat's style must somehow be convincing to writers who know little or nothing about the Arctic and who do not care to check statements. But it seems to me that such reviews should be content to discuss only the literary merits or demerits of the book.[55]

Scott Young then replied to Porsild's reply and Saturday Night closed off the argument.

But this was not the end of it. In January, 1954, an

Opposition back-bencher demanded, during question period, that the government do something to help the Eskimos mentioned in Mowat's book. Had the government allowed them to starve? In reply the Northern Affairs Minister Jean Lesage said: "The Eskimos do not exist. The author is a liar--it is false, the allegations are false...The basic information in the book is false."[56] The Minister offered to print Dr. Porsild's Beaver review and have it distributed to the house, whereupon a Saskatoon M.P. rose to suggest that in all fairness Mowat's reply should be published along with Porsild's attack. Lesage then refused to print anything.[57]

In the fall of 1954 the Department of Northern Affairs publicly acknowledged the existence of Mowat's Eskimos by sending in several loads of emergency food to what obviously was Mowat's band. In the final chapter of his argument with Porsild Mowat wrote "Minority Report" for Saturday Night in the fall of 1954, in which he reviewed the whole matter and at last was able to refute Porsild's accusations. But of course the horror of the situation was now obvious and the need to refute the review was not as great.

Reviews of the American edition of People of the Deer were varied. Time dramatized People as a 450-word news story titled "Tribal Tragedy: Too Little, Too Late." In typical

Time style it began: "The smell of death hung over the dozen igloos clustered about the bleak shores of the Little Lakes in the treeless Barren Lands of the Northwest Territories."[58] The New York Times Book Review (written by an "old arctic hand") had no sympathy for Mowat's cause. The reviewer accused Mowat of holding "disregard for public fact," and calls People a "genuine polemic," which "certainly discharges the author's debt to his friends."[59] The reviewer in the New Yorker showed a delightful sense of humour. He called People a "travel book" and remarked that "Mr. Mowat is something of a fanatic about the tribe--or what is left of it after twenty years of slow starvation."[60]

But it was, significantly, a producer of television documentary, writing in Saturday Review who best expressed the feelings felt by most readers of Mowat's book. He called it, "the most damning indictment of his (Mowat's) own government and country, the so-called white race and its Anglo-Saxon branch in particular, the Christian religion, and civilization as a whole, that had ever been written." He calls it a "tale, told in a wonderful documentary form" that is "truly terrific, by reason of its content and its impact." What he learned from Mowat's book "so stunned him" that he came away "aflame with fury. Every reader should put down the book

with similar emotions...Any Eskimo, or American Indian, for that matter, reading this book may be expected to burst into tears or run amock. We almost hope it will be the latter..."[61]

Reviewers of the English edition of People were distressed. The New Statesman and Nation reviewer speaks of his "white-heat of feeling" and "anger throughout the narrative."[62] The Times Literary Supplement called it "the most powerful book to come out of the Arctic for some years," and went on to say, "its story is so tragic that any words recording it would wring the heart."[63]

But it was Lord Tweedsmuir, who had in his youth spent several years in the sub-Arctic barrens, who gave what I believe to be the most thoughtful review of Mowat's first documentary. He calls it "perhaps the finest book ever written about the Eskimo Peoples," and Farley Mowat a man "short of stature but great of heart and with eyes to see and a heart to feel."[65] He passionately verifies the validity of Mowat's major contention, and as to Mowat's errors in fact, says:

This book is written to fight the battle of a dying race. The sight of many a stone grave, and the traces of many a derelict camp makes Mowat lash out at the heedless white man, whether government, missionary or trader. He spares none of them. It is not surprising that, in lashing about him, he deals some indiscriminatory blows.

. . . . . .

It is good that there are men who will fight a battle like this, for the cataclysms of the last few decades have stunned our sensibility and civilized man finds that he can bear the troubles of others with greater and greater fortitude.[66]

Yet People must be important beyond its campaign to obtain help for an Eskimo band, for it sells well today. People is available throughout Canada, and McClelland and Stewart report continuing good sales of their five dollar hardbound and their ninety-five cent softbound editions. The paper edition originally published in 1965 has sold twenty-five thousand copies and the cloth edition originally published in 1952, six thousand. (Both figures are accurate to the nearest thousand to December 31, 1967.) There are no figures available for the American paperback, the seventy-five cent Pyramid edition which is sold throughout Canada, and, as the lowest-priced edition, is the most popular.

Yet People is extremely popular outside of Canada. It won two American awards: in 1952 the President's Medal, and in 1953 the Anisfield-Wolf Award given for a book on the subject of race relations which "by presentation of these problems may lead to their solution." It is published in three American editions: a four dollar, twenty-one centimetre, Atlantic Press Monthly cloth edition originally published in 1952; a seven dollar and fifty-cent, twenty-two

COVER DESIGN: B. STANLEY-JONES

PEOPLE OF THE DEER FARLEY MOWAT

Farley Mowat lived for two years among the survivors of the Ihalmiut Eskimos of the Central Barrens, shared their incredible hardships, came to understand their language, their customs and history, and brought their extreme plight to government attention. His story, "People of the Deer," received front page attention and a storm of indignant denials from the people and agencies who found themselves criticized.

LITHO'D IN CANADA

CBL 9

PEOPLE OF THE DEER FARLEY MOWAT

McCLELLAND & STEWART

$1.25

PEOPLE OF THE DEER

FARLEY MOWAT

centimetre, Atlantic Press Monthly cloth edition originally published in 1956; and a seventy-five cent, eighteen centimetre, Pyramid paper edition originally published in 1968. People has been published in three United Kingdom editions: a fifteen shilling, twenty-one centimetre, Michael Joseph clothbound edition originally published in 1952; a seven shilling and sixpence, eighteen centimetre, Sphere Books paperbound edition originally published in 1968; and a twenty-one centimetre, 272-page cloth edition published in 1954 by Michael Joseph for members of the Readers Union only.

People has also been published in Paris (1953), Stockholm (1953), Stutgart (1954), Milan (1954), Oslo (1954), West Germany (1956), Yugoslavia (1959), Berlin (1962), and in Moscow (1963).

People has been condensed in Outdoor Life (December, 1963), and excerpts have appeared in many Canadian and American magazines: Atlantic (January-March, 1952), Reader's Digest (January, 1953), True (December, 1952), Saturday Evening Post (January 31, 1953), and of course MacLean's (March 1, 1952) which offered five photographs of the Ihalmiut. Selections from People have been anthologized in Great Canadian Writing (1966), and Best Post Stories of 1953. Publications by Mowat resulting from People have appeared in

Cavalier, Saturday Night, Saturday Evening Post, Argosy, Magazine Digest, Arctic Circular, Bluebook, and on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

When People was published, one reviewer predicted it was "likely to do more harm than good, even to the very people the author wishes to befriend."[66] There can be little doubt that Mowat's "Operation Eskimo" (and particularly People) was responsible for creating the public outrage which forced partial withdrawal of the power structure in the north, and brought about the creation of the Department of Northern Affairs.

But this new situation was not entirely beneficial. In an interview in 1967, Mowat tells of the results of People of the Deer:

> After 1953 the government saw to it that no Eskimo died of malnutrition and that the medical services were improved and nobody froze to death. But they turned the whole of the Canadian Arctic into a charity ward. The effect upon the people of the north was as deleterious as outright starvation and neglect...This is a terrible thing to admit, but I may have done more damage to the Eskimos than can all of the people I insulted and attacked so ferociously in my early days.[67]

It was in this frame of mind that Mowat wrote The Desperate People in 1959. It was intended as a sequel to the 1952 People, authenticating it and bringing it up to date. Publication of Desperate People[68] marked the end of Mowat's

The Desperate People

by FARLEY MOWAT

With woodcuts by Rosemary Kilbourn

AN ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS BOOK

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY

Boston/Toronto

direct involvement in Eskimo affairs. As a conclusion to "Operation Eskimo" it stirred up little controversy, and just barely recovered printing costs. McClelland and Stewart report hard cover sales to April, 1968 of 7,381.)

Certainly Mowat had not lost the ability to outrage. As Gavin White said in Canadian Forum: "This book will shock the reader, anger him, make him wish it wasn't true."[69] Ivan Sanderson, writing in Saturday Review, was "both nauseated and appalled," and warns his readers:

> Unless you are completely insensible to pure horror, you are in for a profound emotional experience. Accounts of millions deliberately killed in prison camps are bad enough, but the story of a gentle people just as deliberately starved into virtual extinction in the name of 'kindness' and religious 'soul-saving' is so utterly disgusting that it comes very close to destroying any respect one may have remaining for our own race.[70]

Even Mowat's longstanding enemy the Beaver, was outraged: "I think that most of us will not want to be reminded (if we already know) or to be told (if we don't know) that, during a period of mounting prosperity in our land, men, women and children starved and froze to death through the neglect and indifference of our government and ourselves, who should have known."[71]

Yet there was little controversy. One reason, certainly, is that documentation in Desperate People is so over-

whelming as to make criticism on basis of fact difficult. (There is even an appendix listing the complete personal history of each member of the Ihalmiut from 1946 to 1958.) The illustrations were excellent and the map a much better one than had been inserted in People. Extending back in time, Desperate People even corrected error in fact and vagueness (deliberate, though, says Mowat) that had occurred in People.

Certainly there was no lack of incredibly powerful images of outrage in Desperate People. Few readers could forget Kikik's tremendous odyssey of suffering culminating in her trial for murdering her husband's best friend. When this chapter from Desperate People was published in MacLean's it drew widespread reaction of shame and horror.

Many images were directed against the RCMP: For example, RCMP inaction allows Eskimos to starve, but when these same Eskimos break into a food cache so as to eat, RCMP action is decisive and unthinking. Such images created feeling which questioned one of the basic images of Canada: The myth of police as harsh but fair. As Mowat put it in a 1960 interview: "I concentrated on the Mounties, who've had too much favourable publicity lately. I expect to see the Musical Ride marching down my driveway any day now."[72]

Perhaps Desperate People could have caused much public

outrage, but conditions were just not right. Largely as a result of Mowat's campaign, the Department of Northern Affairs had been created and many of its policies were enlightened, however fumbling they might have been in application. Perhaps the days were past when Ottawa could silence unwelcome critics by simply saying it was not true and government knew best.

Besides, no one had much to gain by keeping the issues alive, except perhaps for Mowat. When he flew back in 1958 to greet the remaining People of the Little Hills and saw their living death, he felt personally responsible. Desperate People in his last attempt to be true to his role of "eyes of the Ihalmiut" he adopts at the end of People. And when he ends Desperate People with a vision of hope and promise for the Ihalmiut at Rankin Inlet (and thus cancels the outrage created in the earlier part of the book) he is atoning for his past action that created the dismal life-within-death the Ihalmiut suffer. For in the same way the Judas-like Canadian public has betrayed the people of the deer, Mowat has put his subject on the sacrificial altar.

IV

ISABEL LEBOURDAIS AND

THE TRIAL OF STEVEN TRUSCOTT

In the early afternoon of June 11, 1959, a search party looking for a twelve-year-old girl named Lynne Harper, missing for two days from her home in the RCAF Station at Clinton, Ontario, found her body in a wood-lot. She had been raped and murdered. The last person seen with her was fourteen-year-old Steven Truscott, a school-mate whose father, like Lynne's, was stationed at Clinton. Forty-eight hours after the discovery of the body, Steven was arrested and charged with the child's murder. He was brought to trial in the courthouse at Goderich, the county town; and on September 16, convicted and sentenced to be hanged.

There was considerable public outcry--both in Canada and abroad--at the thought of hanging a fourteen-year-old. The Manchester Guardian called the Canadian Government's failure to commute Steven's sentence "an outrage to every human instinct,"[1] which prompted the Justice Minister, Davie Fulton, to "assure the public the boy won't hang."[2]

(Although Steven spent 114 days in death row.)

The Ontario Court of Appeals refused to reverse the conviction, and later, on January 12, 1960, the Supreme Court of Canada declined to act. Steven, his sentence commuted, was sent to the Ontario Training School for Boys to begin serving a life sentence.

About this time, Isabel LeBourdais, a middle-aged part-time public relations copy-writer for the Ontario Association of Nurses, became interested in the case and ordered a copy of the transcript of the trial. (She later said that having a son Steven's age had made the case disturbing.) While studying the manuscript, she realized, as she says, "that Steven was not guilty and sick, but innocent and normal, and that no one was turning a hand to prove it."[3] Thus began "a moral duty that would involve my life until the duty was done."[4]

She first submitted articles to Chatelaine and the Star Weekly, which their editors refused to publish on the advice of lawyers. She then decided to avoid censorship problems by writing a book.[5] Pierre Berton offered to collaborate with her, but she said it was her story and she could handle it.[6]

For three years Mrs. LeBourdais re-wrote the book,

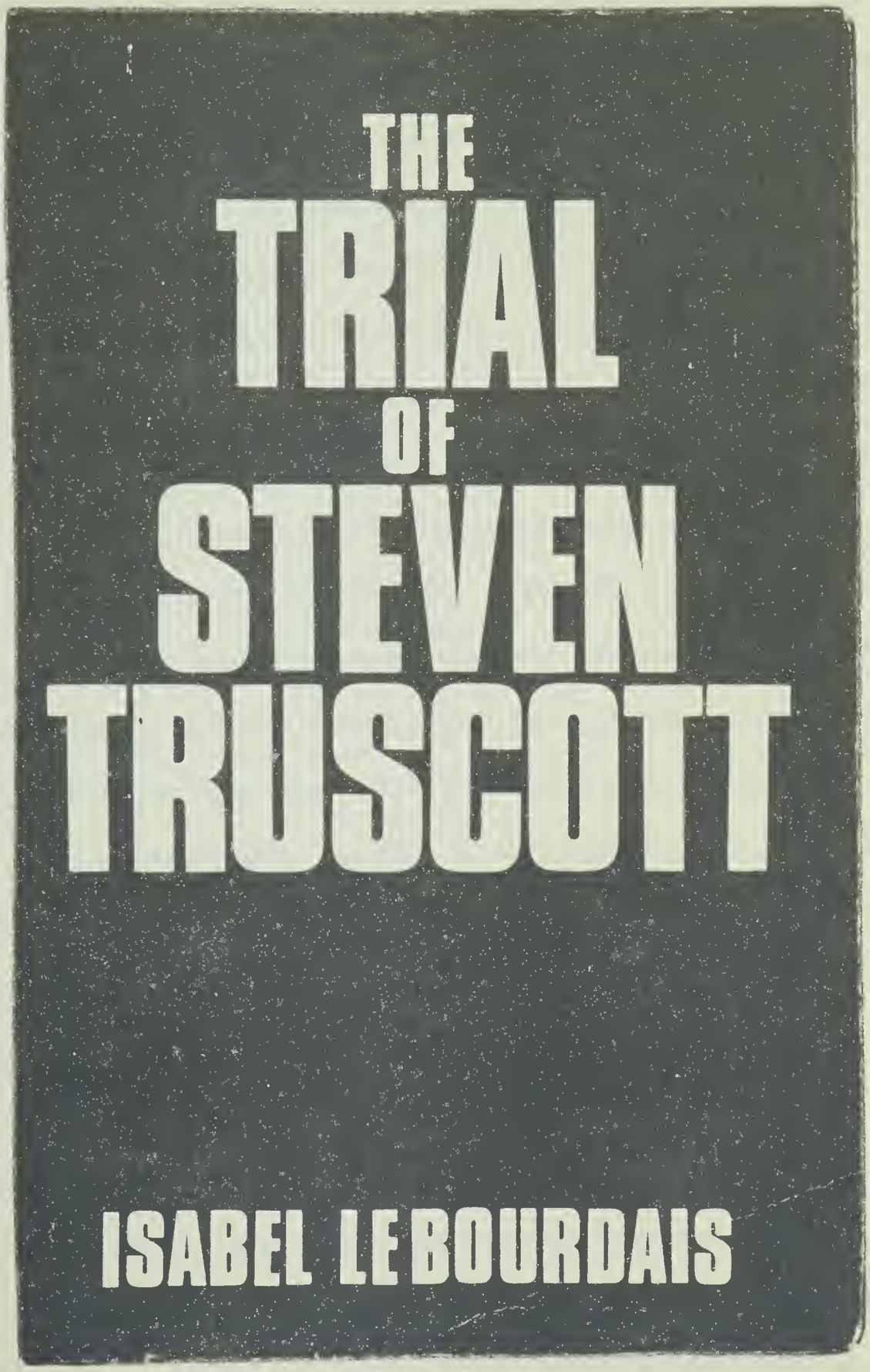
submitting it unsuccessfully to Macmillan, Doubleday, McGraw-Hill, Clarke-Irwin and finally to McClelland and Stewart. (She re-wrote the book three times for Jack McClelland.) Each publisher told her their lawyers had all advised against publication. Claiming a conspiracy among the legal profession to silence her, she went abroad for a publisher, finding one in Victor Gollanez, an English left-wing crusader.

McClelland and Stewart eagerly acquired Canadian rights (libel action would now be primarily directed against Gollanez), and so finally, over six years after Steven's incarceration, in the week of March 25, 1966, Isabel LeBourdais' The Trial of Steven Truscott was published in Canada.

The front cover of Trial[7] displays the title and author's name in white lettering on a dark red background. The book measures five and one-half inches wide and eight inches tall. Trial is 240 pages long and is printed on poor quality paper with fairly small type crowded onto the page. It sells for two dollars and fifty cents.

Trial is organized into a foreword and fourteen chapters. Prefatory material includes a two-page map and a dedication (to Doris Truscott, Steven's mother). There is also a table of contents and an epigraph (by John F. Kennedy).

The book is, of course, about justice. It is not just


THE
TRIAL
OF
STEVEN
TRUSCOTT
ISABEL LE BOURDAIS

a demand that an error in the process be made right, but is a powerful emotional statement that the legal system on which we base our lives is simply an unthinking machine motivated by expediency. Not by reasons of malevolence do Canadian courts error (in what we imagine to be the case in Nazi Germany), not by reason of perversity (as Kafka depicts in the world of his Trial), but by reason of, as Judge Holmes said, "Getting this thing over as soon as possible" (129).

This book caused such outrage and disruption in Canadian life as it did, because the image of the judge has such a place in the Canadian imagination. Where, in the United States popular juvenile media spends much time convincing its young public of the need of justice and right that must be defended, we in Canada presume a purity and dedication from our law-giving hierarchy. In Canada, disrespect shown toward the court, such as exhibited in the United States by the "Chicago Seven", is unthinkable. The Canadian bringer-of-law resides in the myth of the fair and honest "Mountie" or of Matthew Bigby, the hanging judge of British Columbia's lawless Caribou. (Bigby was stern but fair as Solomon, and he had a fine sense of humour.) It is because Canadians have deep within their psyche a profound belief in state justice (in Fry's apt words justice "haunts our imagination") that Isabel

LeBourdais' images of outrage are so successful.

LeBourdais' evidence, which damns the Truscott trial--and the Canadian legal system--is so irrefutable as to demand a personal confrontation between illusion and reality from every reader. This dichotomy--suggested by LeBourdais in her image of the adult world versus the world of children--is perhaps best expressed in the scene where the doctor wants Steven to confess: "This boy, whose body gave in to the point where he was confused, almost incoherent, utterly exhausted, held to his story. He insisted that he had only given Lynne a ride to Highway Eight--he didn't kill her. Over and over, adults declared he was a liar, but they could not make him say the words they so much desired" (91).

Throughout the book the child speaks the truth--providing his view remains uncontaminated by adult hypocrisy and expediency. Early in Trial LeBourdais tells us that "if there were children or teenagers who believed Steven guilty, it was not until after certain adults had used a great deal of persuasion" (33).

"Adults" believe what will make their lives easier, that if Steven were guilty then their girls were safe, and no local man could be responsible; so he is guilty. Adult life is depicted as a horrible grim game, with the trial itself a

microcosm of this world. It is in the introduction that LeBourdais calls Steven's unfortunate initiation into the adult world "a horrible, grim game with the accused tossed back and forth like a ball amid barrages of melodramatics and rhetoric" (12). She later speaks of another younger boy "merely treated like a pawn on a chessboard. The opponent would try to take him off when the game was played at the trial" (39).

Children, as yet innocent and free, do not yet live in the adult world of police and R.C.A.F. discipline, a world so perverse as to send Dan Truscott away from his family on unusually short notice. And, Dan Truscott, the adult who does not question the nature of his world (one week, man of the year, the next, despised by all) in Job-like fashion, obediently leaves. It is no accident that LeBourdais' three most used concepts are justice, innocence and freedom, for these concepts embody the world of the child, so typified by Steven who could smile at the judge throughout the trial. In this way LeBourdais clearly equates hypocrisy with experience and truth with innocence.

It is also no accident that LeBourdais' best writing occurs when she adopts Steven's point of view, for LeBourdais is herself a child, as indicated by her faith that justice

can--and will--be done. She is, in her childish way, amazed at how the judge reacts: "Would any judge in any Canadian court allow any witness to swear in the witness box that someone else was doing something else somewhere else?" (185) Neither does she give up hope that the judge will eventually become just. As she said immediately before the judge addressed the jury: "Only the judge could give the answers... and set the record straight" (165). Certainly such a naive belief heightens the irony of the judge's incredibly unjust behaviour, and adds to the believability of the situation,but it also established the "innocent" persona of the author so as to create grounds for believability of her eventual outrage.

In one place the judge warns the jury to "watch children who give evidence," as, he suggests, they cannot tell the difference between appearance and reality. (169) How ironic, for LeBourdais' portrait of the judge is of a man with that very ailment he sees most in those who have it least. LeBourdais' judge is sick: "Holmes was well known to be a sick man. He repeatedly urged the lawyers to hurry up and get finished.. An hour or so in court, and the magistrate would become anxious for a short rest in his own chambers; he died five months later of cirrhosis of the liver" (44). The judge's

outburst that implied Steven had killed Lynne, his inaccurate and misleading trial summary to the jury, his peculiar questions, and most important of all, his oft-repeated desire to get the trial over, mark his sickness as the same disease that inflicts the sick adult world. But as The Judge, the arbitrator of what is real and what is false, his sickness is unendurable.

What then of the other "responsible" administrators of the state? The police offend our notion (probably gained through detective fiction) of what police should be. While we revere a notion of Sherlock Holmes' fair and thorough justice, LeBourdais presents a picture of men looking for the easy, obvious answers, who ignore any contradictory evidence; men who care nothing for the rights of the individual, men who are rude and stupid.

The doctors are shown to be ignorant, inflexible, incompetent, proud and arrogant. As LeBourdais says, "the oral statements of Dr. Brooks and Dr. Penistan were responsible for: pointing the finger of suspicion at Steven by the following morning; for his arrest; his trial; his conviction; his sentence to hang; and his present imprisonment" (154). And the doctor shows himself to be a distinctly evil force when he undertakes to obtain Steven's confession. The Crown

Attorney, as the last evil agent of adulthood and administration, is depicted as a man without values, determined to win no matter what he has to do. In her shocked, "childish" way, LeBourdais asks: "Was this the way prosecutors won convictions in Canadian courts?" (165)

Even those adults on Steven's side are impotent or unenergetic in their aid. Steven's lawyer is "renowned and accurate" (88), but seemingly would rather not win the game if he has to resort to tricks: "Many, many times Crown witnesses under cross-examination by Mr. Donnelly, changed their stories, or admitted inconsistencies, and yet this was not the result of any but pertinent and informed questions. Mr. Donnelly called no one a liar nor did he impugn dishonest motives to witnesses" (140). There is, of course, the faint suggestion that Donnelly's pending appointment to the Supreme Court influenced his court behaviour.

LeBourdais is not a great author. In many places her style falls to the level of a grade nine essay. However, her feeling for the techniques of documentary are sound. She provides a mass of detail which convinces the reader (a good example is the description of Lynne's twisted and raped body), and her irony is usually effective.

But LeBourdais' use of irony can be heavy-handed

when, for example, she mechanically alternates quotations from learned, famous men showing the way things should be, with actual situations. Also the map and the many footnotes, which in most authors is proof of accurate documentation, becomes in LeBourdais' hands a demonstration of pretentiousness. One doubts that many readers were impressed by lists of unknown letters after each of her "experts'" names.

Her interesting use of homespun metaphor probably contributes to her sincerity. She describes a hot day by saying, "Father might even mow the grass if he didn't mind getting himself into a complete sweat in the process" (15), and in another place: "Anyone who has ever tied up a parcel will understand this point" (77).

There is also a question of academic honesty. Mrs. LeBourdais, usually a thorough researcher, neglected to include the date of publication of one of her references titled Recent Advances in Forensic Medicine. A reviewer "graciously" pointed out that the book was published in 1938 and this could hardly be considered "recent."[8]

In most ways, however, she follows what has become the standard way of framing the outrage: A running description of the incidents punctuated by expressions of outrage. (A good example is the "No one explained..." series on page

46.) Then there is much detail and a show of attempts to discuss the truth of the situation (her interviews with the jury about their verdict offered excellent insight into the legal system). Traditionally the outrage ends with an appeal for action (LeBourdais calls for the formation of a Royal Commission) and a reminder of the personal implications of the situation. (Thus LeBourdais reminds us that "Steven was a boy, like yours or mine" 240 .)

Naturally, it is the power of Isabel's images of outrage that give the book its import. There is the image of fourteen-year-old Steven, confined in a barred cell, five feet by six, with "a cot and a pail and no light but a bare bulb in the corridor outside," only able to speak to his parents through "a double wall of wire-screens, a few inches apart, and so heavy that it was impossible to see the person on the other side clearly" (44). Few readers could forget the image of Steven, after a three and one-half hour ordeal with the confession-seeking Dr. Addison, "confused, utterly exhausted, barely able to stand but still declaring his innocence. He finally fell asleep on his father's shoulder" (32).

There is the incredible "confusion" where Doris Truscott was told about her son that "She could not touch him nor speak to him; only the police could do that" (48). LeBourdais

then reports that "Another court official told the author that the boy was brought to his office for short recesses but the parents were so heartless they never even came to speak to him." To which LeBourdais comments: "One wonders what was told to Steven" (48).

There is the police inspector warning Dan Truscott to stop trying to obtain evidence that might prove his son's innocence, a warning that Dan Truscott "had better mind his own business" (40); and there is the incredible scene in which Steven is taken off to serve his life sentence: "On the way to Kingston, the two Goderich men stopped for a meal in a restaurant. Before leaving their car, they fastened iron chains around the lad's legs. He had to walk into the restaurant with a heavy, dragging, clanking noise at each step. Everyone in the street and inside the restaurant turned and stared at him" (222).

The author of a documentary convinces his readers that facts are valid, by convincing them that he is a good and sensitive, honest person. In much the same way, LeBourdais trys to convince us that Steven is not capable of such a crime by reason of his conventional goodness. He is portrayed as the ideal all-Canadian boy, and this one-dimensional depiction occupies much of the first part of the book.

Steven is absolutely obedient to his mother's wishes. He plays when told to, goes for coffee when told to, "returning in minutes with the coffee" (17). When told to be back from playing at 8:30, that he had to baby-sit, "he agreed readily enough," and, when he returns, on time, LeBourdais has him say, "Well, I made it, Mom!" (20)

He goes to bed at a reasonable hour, and tells his mother when he tears his trousers. Apparently, just for the fun of it, he helps Farmer Larson with "the work" (21). He is so good-natured that LeBourdais describes him (in the most grotesque metaphor) as having "a grin so wide that one of his friends described it as cutting his face in half, from ear to ear" (17).

He is so good at individual sports that "he had won the senior athletic cup at the school field day" (17), and we are told "the school team...always counted on him for leadership" (33). Yet with all his ability he retained a sense of compassion. As the little MacDonald boy said when he learned of Steven's arrest: "Steven never hurt Lynne. He wouldn't hurt anybody. He was the only one of the big kids that never teased us little kids" (33).

This amazing study of virtue certainly makes for ironic effect when LeBourdais tells the reader that Steven's

skill in sports was offered by the prosecutor as "proof" of Steven's ability to tear off the branch that covered Lynne's body; and that Steven's naturalness and friendliness--and particularly his openness when questioned by Lynne's father about Lynne's disappearance--would be used against him both in trial and the subsequent Supreme Court hearing into the trial.

If Steven was a "nice" boy then Lynne was a horrid girl. (Steven is, after all, still a child, whereas Lynne, it is suggested, is on her way to becoming a woman.) She is disobedient, surly and forward; the product, it seems, of a permissive home. On page 17 in the relatively short section of Trial in which Lynne is depicted (and her characteristics listed, it seems solely to contrast her with Steven), she is shown arriving home from a baseball game when "dinner was nearly over." She is allowed to eat "anything she might choose," and then further demonstrates her independence from rules by her "somewhat heated argument" with her parents over her right to go swimming. "Returning in a huff...," (she has failed to gain permission to swim from another authority) she then leaves "without saying where she was going."

She is depicted as forward in her relationship with Steven, smiling at boys, and there are certain sexual over-

tones in LeBourdais' not-too-subtle suggestion of Lynne's parents' lack of concern at their daughter staying out all night: "Perhaps she had stayed out late before" (22).

The book was an immediate success. It had all the elements of a detective mystery with a do-it-yourself ending thrown in; and what is more important, it was published just before the Federal parliament free vote on capital punishment was to take place. (McClelland and Stewart, bright merchandisers that they are, sent complimentary copies to all members of the Federal parliament a week before the book was issued to book stores.) McClelland and Stewart declared it a "best seller" on the basis of sales the first day it appeared[9] and the first edition was sold out within a week. An experimental computerized index to thirteen major Canadian daily newspapers shows that during the first week of publication, news items directly concerned with LeBourdais' book occupied 195 columns of type.[10] In the first month, Trial was mentioned two thousand times in Canadian publications[11] and Isabel LeBourdais, who was travelling the country to promote her book and Steven's innocence, made eighty-four radio and television appearances.[12]

LeBourdais received the Frank Ryan "Woman of Action" award and was later named by MacLean's as the "Woman of the

AUTHOR ISABEL LeBOURDAIS WITH TRUSCOTT'S PARENTS

. . . her book started controversy which led to review

Author Receives Award

Year." LeBourdais was receiving several hundred letters a day; many of which included donations to help her promote Truscott's innocence. One man sent one hundred dollars with this note: "I felt the boy was innocent at the time of the trial, but I didn't do anything about it. You did."[13]

Columnists, reviewers and broadcasters seemed to compete for the distinction of proclaiming loudest their lack of faith in Canadian justice. Coffee-break, beer-parlour and tea-table consciousness throbbed with outrage at the unjust imprisoning of an innocent child. Never has the due process of Canadian justice been so put into question as by the case of Steven Truscott.

American lawyer Melvin Belli said the trial of Steven Truscott would cause Canadians to hang their heads in shame. With the most magnificent mixed-metaphor he announced: "It is horrendous how Truscott was railroaded into a kangaroo court."[14] The more sedate reviewer in the Nation said at the end of a four-page review: "Thinking Canadians will continue to feel a deep uneasiness about what happened and how it could have happened, and why it was a layman who wrote a book drawing attention to the case, and not a legal expert."[15]

LeBourdais had begun her book with an invocation to justice, expressing need for the continuance of certain legal

principles; in the foreword she more or less expresses her confidence in the justness (or the potential for justness) of the system. But it soon becomes clear that there are many, many rules of law that guarantee the defendant an unfair trial. In chapter four in a bitter note she said, "In general, the trial was conducted in accordance with accepted Canadian practice. As usual, the advantage given to the prosecution before the trial was continued in court" (56), and later she remarks: "The defence had to follow other rules obviously to the advantage of the prosecution" (58).

Her frequent and convincing examples of the unfairness of the Canadian legal system were enough to convince the Toronto Globe and Mail's book editor:

> The book raises such clear and fundamental questions about some aspects of our system of justice that its importance goes beyond the question of Steven Truscott's guilt or innocence.
>
> Truscott may well go free, with society's apologies, but the real work will not be finished until the system which permitted him to be questioned, arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced as he was, is thoroughly re-examined and changed where necessary.[16]

In the Vancouver Province, Lorne Parton, the book editor, made this statement:

> The emotion that I carried away from this book was one of fury and outrage...To one who believes our police are the most humane and just in the world it is horrifying to read of the harrying and rousting of this teenager.
>
> To one who cherishes our freedoms and our way of life,

it is sickening to contemplate such blatant disregard for the very things that separate our country from the totalitarian regimes. I recommend The Trial of Steven Truscott to everyone who cares about truth, about justice and about his fellow man.[17]

James Bannerman, writing in MacLean's, tells of having to stop throughout Trial at parts "at once heartrending and sickening," and reports that, "The Trial of Steven Truscott has significance which goes far beyond any incidental aspect, and makes it virtually required reading for every Canadian seriously concerned about the administration of justice in this country."[18] Most opinion ranged from the fiery Canadian Dimension review which called Trial "The strangest and most tragic miscarriage of 'justice' that the Western world has ever seen in living memory...a foremost challenge to the conscience of every free and law-abiding citizen of Canada and will remain such until the author's demand for a full enquiry by a Royal Commission has been granted,"[19] to the demure Library Journal review which spoke of "a judge, whose conduct of the inquiry is not above reproach."[20]

The reaction to the English edition of Trial was immediate and strong. The New Statesman reported: "This is a powerful book and it will probably stir the English-speaking world in a way that Canada seems slow to exper-

ience."[21] The Times Literary Supplement said: "Mrs. LeBourdais's brilliant and courageous study of the Truscott case can marshal public opinion in insisting that the courts themselves stand at the bar of justice."[22]

There were, however, a few adverse comments. Kildare Dobbs took exception--quite valid exception--to LeBourdais' "excited plea that a nice boy like this couldn't have done a dirty deed like that. The question wasn't whether he would have done it--but did he do it?"[23] But public feeling was so in support of Steven that one excited reader of the review wrote Dobbs: "Her book is not an 'excited plea', but a realistic and shrewd portrayal of what the facts reveal in accordance with her four years of careful research...Twisted remarks like these tend to belittle a fine achievement as well as make mischief."[24]

An editorial in the Vancouver Province accused LeBourdais of "Manipulation of justice through arousing public emotions" and "manipulation of the capital punishment debate." LeBourdais' book is, the editorial announced, "More a triumph of the publishing art than a triumph of justice."[25] As might be expected, LeBourdais dismisses her objectors with the words: "The critics all are part of the Establishment."[26]

The most well-thought-out review appeared in Esquire,

the American magazine noted for its dedication to the documentary. Malcolm Muggeridge, in his regular column "Books", reached an important insight into the nature of documentary: he realized the author, ultimately interested in affecting the values of the book's reader, is really interested in the process of change, and only on one level interested in the vehicle of that process. He says: "One has an uneasy feeling that sometimes the champions of the wronged become more intent on the triumph of their cause than on the well-being of the victims on whose behalf it has been undertaken."[27] Muggeridge then applies this insight to Steven Truscott:

> If he was my son, however firmly I might believe that he had been wrongfully convicted, I should still prefer oblivion to vindication. I should want him at all costs to be spared being taken once more through that agonizing cross-examination, being made to relive that nightmare experience--scarcely less nightmarish if he was innocent than if he was guilty.[28]

Muggeridge is speaking of Truscott's new trial, which was eventually brought about by outrage generated by LeBourdais' images. In much the same way that Mowat sensed the image of outrage he developed in People would bring about the destruction of that which he wished to maintain, Muggeridge seems to sense that Truscott has been offered up for sacrifice in the hope that our conscience will be cleared. But surely the motives of documentary are higher than a mere attempt to

make its readers feel honorable for having joined with others in protest; surely a sacrifice results in more than a cleansing of the conscience. The aim of documentary is enlightenment, as Grierson so aptly put it, and to _this_ end in religious terms no sacrifice is too great.

It was the rare Canadian who had _any_ doubt about the innocence of Steven Truscott. A group of high school students succeeded in personally handing Prime Minister Pearson their fifty-five name petition seeking a government inquiry.[29] (Even Pope Paul VI was asked to sign a petition in a bid for a new trial.[30])

In parliament, on March 11, Liberal M.P. James Byrne (one of the authors of the resolution seeking to abolish capital punishment) rose in an adjournment debate and announced: "Mr. Speaker, personally I have almost lost confidence in our jury system."[31] Byrne read passages from _Trial_ and announced he was willing to stake his seat in the Commons on the innocence of the boy. He then implored the Solicitor General to set up an investigation. The next day, amid a shouting match, Opposition leader Diefenbaker asked for a Royal Commission and, under growing pressure, Solicitor General Pennell announced, on March 19, he was commissioning a study of the entire Truscott matter within the Department

of Justice.[32] The editor of the Vancouver Sun disclosed that "Emotion is running so high that a member of the government said to me Thursday the pressures were irresistable, and the government had no choice but to order the inquiry demanded by Mrs. LeBourdais and her supporters."[33]

There were a number of factors involved in this "height of emotion." Book sales were incredibly high (McClelland and Stewart were running special shuttle planes across the country to meet the demand), LeBourdais was campaigning strenuously for Truscott's release, and the media, already sensitive on the issue of capital punishment, were producing some interesting supporting images of outrage.

To this day there are many people who would recognize Steven Truscott as the cheerful young fourteen-year-old standing behind his bicycle. This photograph was reproduced hundreds of times in the press and on television. But Steven was not fourteen now, he was twenty-one and there was much public concern as to what kind of a man he had become. It was through the hundreds of stories which appeared about this time that LeBourdais' image of the adult world versus the world of the child was strengthened. In these stories where Steven was always pictured as a quiet, perfectly polite and wholesome young man; the prison system--to great ironic

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effect--was characterized in precisely the same ways as LeBourdais had portrayed the Canadian legal and police systems.

Because Steven continued to declare his complete innocence, he was refused parole. When interviewed, Dr. George Scott, the chairman of Steven's parole board, remarked, "The only guy who is going to be hurt by all this publicity is Steven Truscott." When asked for his attitude toward Steven, he explained, "No confession, no parole."[34] (Truscott claimed that at one point he was threatened with removal to an institution for the criminally insane if he did not confess.[35]) Truscott was injected with L.S.D. by a psychologist in 1962 with, the doctor reported, "no effect on Truscott." The doctor specifically said the drug was not administered in an attempt to determine guilt or innocence.[36]

Steven began to have influential visitors. Stanley Knowles, N.D.P. parliamentary whip, said after a weekend visit to Steven, "I believe he is innocent. He's a normal, decent chap of twenty-one that anybody would be glad to have as a member of the family."[37] Ontario Reforms Minister George Wardrope found Truscott was "just a normal teenager and a nice person," and he "doubted Steven's guilt."[38]

Even prison guards reported that "Steven earned all

possible privileges through good behaviour."[39] (He worked in the penitentiary machine shop and got up early every morning to run a disc jockey program on the prison radio station.)

About this time there was an interesting note in the newspaper which revealed that the jurors held a picnic a year after the Truscott trial, "So their wives and children could get to know each other on a social basis,"[40] and George Bowering, investigating the situation further, found enough factual information to produce for MacLean's the following documentary poem:

IT WAS IN THE NEWSPAPER[41]

One year after
Stephen Truscott
aged 14
was sentenced to hang
in Ontario
the members of the jury
held their first annual
picnic.
It was, apparently,
unsuccessful. Ants got into the bread
and seven years later
Stephen Truscott is not dead.

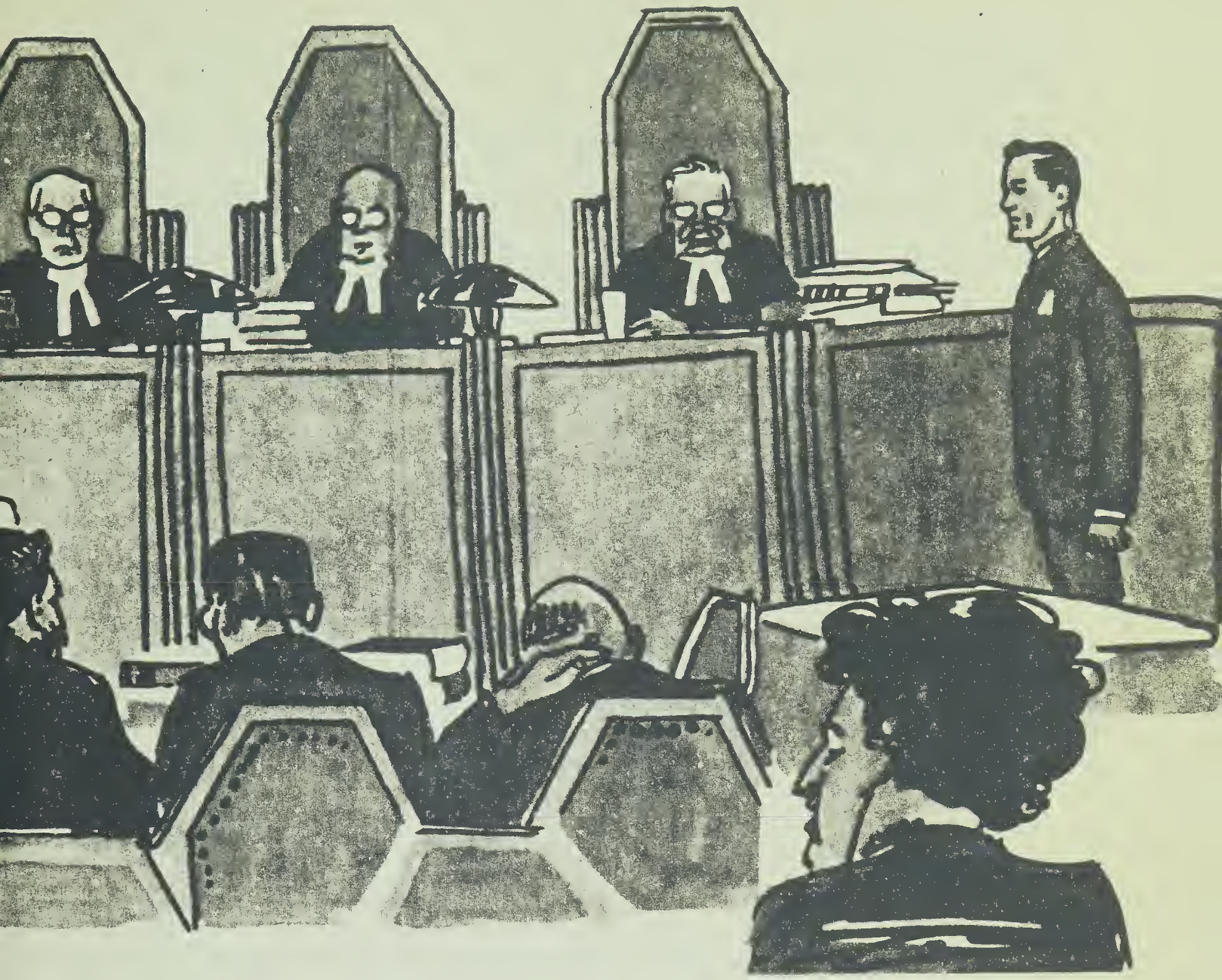
Finally after much, much pressure (perhaps the poem helped) Solicitor General Pennell announced there would be a Supreme Court Hearing into the Truscott case. And, he announced, the court would abandon usual trial procedure. In what appeared to be an amazing victory for LeBourdais, the Supreme Court would set up an agenda of topics for examination

(the same topics LeBourdais questioned in her book) and each side would present its witnesses. Witnesses need not have appeared in the original trial to be called, and the case would be decided on questions of fact as well as law. The Federal government would pay all costs of the appeal (including printing of the seven-volume transcript of the original trial) in what was to be the single most expensive criminal proceeding in Canadian history.[42] Acting for Steven would be one of Toronto's top criminal lawyers, (Defence costs eventually amounted to $20 thousand[43]) and the jury would in effect be made up of nine Supreme Court judges.

The evening before the re-examination of the Truscott case, Southam dailies carried a story titled "Canadian Justice on Trial Wednesday." There were three issues involved, said Duart Farquharson: "The immediate issue is the 1959 conviction of the fourteen-year-old Steven Truscott...The wider issue is the legal processes by which Truscott was sentenced to hang...But the paramount question it raises is public faith in Canadian Justice."[44] And at Collin Bay Penitentiary a senior official said that although penitentiary staff is officially neutral, "we're actually rooting for Steve."[45]

The court reserved a seat at the proceeding for Doris and Dan Truscott, but refused to do so for Mrs. LeBourdais.

At one of the press tables Isabel LeBourdais exhaled a shaky breath



Steven stood erect and for the first time in his life was addressed as 'Mr. Truscott'

She eventually found a seat through the foresight of the CTV network, who hired a student to arrive at the court building at 6:30 a.m. and assure her a place at the unreserved press table. CTV also put her on a $2,500 retainer to report on developments.[46]

But if the Supreme Court refused to recognize Mrs. LeBourdais' part in the drama, Steven Truscott's parents eagerly acknowledged it. They escorted her to and from the court and ran the gauntlet of photographers with her each day. As the Southam Press reporter put it, "In the absence of the prisoner, opening day belonged to Toronto author Isabel LeBourdais. She bounced back and forth to talk to the defence lawyers, kiss Mr. Truscott on the cheek, and take notes at the reporters' table."[47]

The trial lasted for five days and ended with the general expectation of a declaration of Steven's innocence. But that was not to be. Exactly seven months after the beginning of the Supreme Court Reference, on May 4, 1967, it was announced by the Supreme Court that by majority decision the verdict of the original trial "could not be set aside on the ground that it was unreasonable or could not be supported by the evidence," and that, "In our opinion, the judgement of the Court of Appeal for Ontario dismissing the appeal made to

it, was right." There was "no miscarriage of justice."[48] Each of Canada's thirteen major dailies announced the Supreme Court majority decision in large front-page headlines. (The Toronto Telegram devoted five and one-half full pages to photographs and background material, together with the wire service material on which most other Canadian dailies relied.)

Eight of the judges had, impossible as it might seem, found the Truscott boy guilty, not only on factual ground, but because, as they put it: "We do not believe his testimony."[49] The lone dissenting opinion, from Mr. Justice Emmett Hall, called for a new trial. "A bad trial remains a bad trial," he wrote. "The only remedy for a bad trial is a new trial."[50] In a forty-two page dissertation Mr. Justice Hall excoriated the crown counsel and the trial judge in handling the original trial.

James Byrne said he was "terribly disappointed,"[51] although he did not give up his House of Commons seat. Stanley Knowles said: "It appears there is more concern about protecting the processes of our courts than about this young man."[52] Doris and Dan Truscott were stunned by the decision. "God! How much evidence do they need?", Doris cried, her eyes filled with tears.[53]

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TRUSCOTT CONVICTION IS UPHELD

Steven remarked that "The Supreme Court has made a mistake," and went back to his machine shop lathe.[54] Diefenbaker announced that "Further imprisonment would be of little use," and though "nothing further can be done from a judicial standpoint," there would be "no delay in granting Steven Truscott a parole."[55]

Steven's parents petitioned the Federal Cabinet for a new review[56] but the "back-lash" had set in. "Concept of Justice at Stake," said one headline. "Here's One Classic Better Forgotten" said another. The Hamilton Spectator spoke of "our courts brought into contempt by irresponsible distortions and emotional orgies."[57] A Vancouver Sun editorial titled "Case Closed" remarked: "Fair-minded Canadians can ask no more."[58] The Edmonton Journal called for greater responsibility "among those who engage in and direct communication," and unleashed the spectre of a "fast approaching anarchy."[59] The newspaper went so far as to announce the trial was a success because the Supreme Court had done its job. And what was that job? "The Supreme Court's job was to resolve the primary doubt of the public's confidence in the judicial system itself."[60]

Steven gained his pardon in the Fall of 1969 and is now, in early 1970, living on a farm with his uncle near

Vancouver, British Columbia. LeBourdais was last heard of when she paid for a full-page advertisement in the Huron Expositor, a small Ontario weekly, headed "Can You Help?" "If anyone saw Lynne Harper that evening, Steven Truscott can still be proved innocent," it said.[61]

FOOTNOTES

Epigraph

[1]Grierson, On Documentary, 29.

CHAPTER I

[1]White, Ark and Abattoir, 4 .

CHAPTER II

[1]This selection, as well as all other quotations by John Grierson, is taken from the University of California Press edition of Grierson on Documentary, edited by Forsyth Hardy.

[2]However, the backers of Moana were disappointed. As Grierson says in On Documentary:

Hollywood, asking for battles with sharks, got the loveliness of a ceremonial prayer to the gods. And asking for dark-skinned bathing belles, they got a quiet, dignified young heroine with a flower in her ear, who danced superbly but could not possibly be confused with whoopee. In desperation they issued the film as "The Love Life of a South Sea Siren," and gave it a prologue of jangling guitars and shimmying chorus girls. (203)

[3]Lennon, New Lyrics Book, 12.

[4]Jung, Psyche and Symbol, xxiv.

[5]"Newsreel", Film Quarterly, XXII (Winter, 1968-69), 46.

[6]Farley Mowat, "Something to Say", CBC-FM, July 20, 1970.

[7]Shaun Herron, "Smart Alecks Rule the Goggle Box", Vancouver Sun, (December 19, 1969), 4.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Mowat, "Something to Say".

[10]In the April, 1951 issue of Sight and Sound (vol. XIX) Nicholas Vardac wrote about the television cameraman:

Of necessity, the news cameramen were almost always located behind or with the police and the National Guard. Their footage, then, was almost always from the point of view of the law enforcement officials. The audience saw the rioters advancing threateningly toward the camera, or retreating away from it. The attitudes generated and suggested by the angles from which the shots were taken were unfavourable to the rioters--this is not "unbiased coverage", even if the cameraman and the news editor were attempting to remain impartial. ("Documentary Form as an Art Form", 479.)

[11]Atlas magazine of February 1965 reports this happening from the shooting of Jacopetti's latest film Good-Bye, Africa; "On the lead jeep the South African mercenary Ben Louw gripped his machine gun and put his finger to the trigger. Then instead of firing, he turned around toward the first truck which was only six feet behind. He was the cameraman Climati bent over his movie camera, his eye at the view-finder and his fingers adjusting the aperture and range..."Ready?" he asked. But no, they were not ready. The three boys...were still too far away for the focal length of the lens. They would have to change to 1,000 mm or at least to a 300 mm...Louw turned around a second time... The third time...Climati waved that he was ready. The motor of his Arriflex began at the same time as the machine gun. ...and the three Mulelists fell on top of one another on the rust-coloured earth. ...it was the cameraman who gave the signal to shoot for that particular scene." (#528, p18) (Reported by Edgar Sarton in "The Documentary as Actuality, as Poetry, as Fake", on page 18 of the February, 1968 issue of Take One.)

[12]Sarton, "The Documentary as Actuality", 17.

[13]Seymour Krim, "The Newspaper as Literature; Literature as Leadership", Evergreen Review, (August, 1967), 89.

[14]This principle is well illustrated by an incident revolving around a scene from self-styled documentarist Jean-Luc Godard's 1967 film, Weekend: "The bloody sequence in which two men axe a huge pig on camera, then cut its throat on camera, followed by the sounds of dying and a close-up of pulsing blood, disgusts almost everyone, including the distributor. He asked Godard to cut the scene. "Sure," said Godard, "if you'll sign a pledge never to eat pork for the rest of your life." (Reported by Ross Walters in "Splicing Together Jean-Luc Godard", which appeared on page 42 of the July, 1969 issue of Esquire.)

[15]Pat Watson and Doug Leiterman, "How To Survive in the CBC Jungle", MacLean's, (February 5, 1965), 39.

[16]"Life in the Tin-Can Factory", Time, (May 6, 1966), 15.

[17]Ibid.

[18]In the light of radio's many successes it is interesting to speculate on McLuhan's theory that each new medium frees the prior medium to find itself; the onset of radio freed film, television freed radio, and the video tape recorder (VIR) may very well free television.

[19]Denny Boyd, "All About the Town", Vancouver Sun, (August 8, 1968), 8.

[20]"Theatre Meets Reality", Saturday Night, (June, 1970), 11.

[21]"Challenge for Change" I (Spring, 1968), 3.

[22]With the advent of inexpensive video-tape complexes we may see personal and public libraries of "films", in the same way the individual and libraries maintain stocks of recordings, tapes and books. When and if this comes about the economic pressures on the motion picture and television industries which up till now have tended to dictate mediocre, non-controversial content for the widest possible audience will in great measure be relieved and we may look forward to an era of "limited interest" productions for specialized

audiences. If one does not have to fill a movie house, or sell time to a sponsor, it becomes possible to produce works and sell them directly to the people who are interested in them for "home use" on their own video-tape machines and thus circumvent the largest stumbling block in the way of widely diversified "quality" work in the video.

[23]Watt, "Literature of Protest", 471.

[24]Truman Capote, "Playboy Interviews Truman Capote", Playboy, (March, 1968), 51.

[25]Ibid., 56.

[26]Ibid., 51.

[27]Barbara Moon, "Wolfe's New Journalism: Capote's Old Tricks", Saturday Night, (March, 1966), 28.

[28]Krim, "Newspaper as Literature", 89.

[29]Warren Barry, "The New Muckrakers", Edmonton Journal, (February 3, 1967), 49.

[30]"The U. S.'s Toughest Customer", Time, (December 12, 1969), 76.

[31]Ibid., 78.

[32]Ibid., 71.

[33]Ibid., 76.

[34]See V. B. Rhodemizer's Canadian Literature in English, (Montreal: Quality Press, 1965), for an interesting, if incomplete thirty-one page list of creative non-fiction from 1750 on.

[35]Watt, "Literature of Protest", 460-461.

[36]Watt, on page 470 of "Literature of Protest", says: "Few revolutionaries or fellow travellers went so far as Earle Birney who argued in the Canadian Forum that art must temporarily cease until revolutionary action had built a new society where true creativity was possible, but just as few

writers remained at the opposite pole with Robert Finch, whose verse exhibited a controlled aestheticism and formalism justifying his manifesto: 'Beauty my fond fine care.'"

[37]Ibid., 471.

[38]Carol M. Wilson, "The Crusaders", Canadian Author and Bookman, XLI (Summer, 1966), 4.

[39]Farley Mowat, in Blaik Kirby, "Inside Siberia: by the Spy in the Kilt", Toronto Globe and Mail, (November 22, 1969), 37.

[40]Jack McClelland, in Donald Stainsby, "Mowat-McClelland Show: No Rum But Riot of Ideas", Vancouver Sun, (December 6, 1969), 33.

[41]New Books for 1967, 3.

[42]Ibid., 4.

[43]Raymond Hull, "Books and Authors", Canadian Author and Bookman, XLI (Summer, 1966), 5.

[44]Jessica Mitford, in "We're Looking for People Who Want to Write", Atlantic, (July, 1970), 22, reports that in an assessment of the market for writing in the U. S., of the top twenty-six magazines, of 79,812 unsolicited, creative non-fiction manuscripts, fewer than a thousand were accepted. Unsolicited fiction manuscripts fared far worse. Of 182,505 submitted, 560 were accepted. The situation in Canada, while not nearly on the same scale, is probably relatively the same.

[45]Hugh Hood, "The Short Story in Canada", Kenyon Review, XXX (No. 4, 1968), 470.

[46]"The Verge", Canadian Literature No. 29 (Autumn, 1966), 83.

[47]Isabel LeBourdais, "A Measure of Success", Vancouver Province, (April 12, 1966), 12.

[48]If the importance of sales figures in literary study can be gauged by the difficulty in obtaining them then indeed they must be of great value. McClelland and Stewart Limited would not release figures to this author until an

exchange of nine letters between this author and McClelland and Stewart had offered them sufficient assurances. The University of Toronto Press, in a letter dated May 14, 1968, refused to offer any figures at all, on the puzzling basis that: "These figures would be valueless without making comparisons and the comparisons are likely to be misleading in the extreme." (Marshall, Hilary S. Letter to W. B. Stocks, May 14, 1968) So it was indeed surprising when the figures asked for were published in MacLean's in the June, 1968 edition, in an interview with John Porter.

[49]Hull, "Books and Authors", 4.

CHAPTER III

[1]"A Man's Best Friend is His Helpmate", Weekend Magazine, (May 17, 1969), 9.

[2]Farley Mowat, in Cathy Breslin, "Canada's Enfant Terrible", Montrealer, (April, 1960), 17.

[3]"A Man's Best Friend...", Weekend, 10.

[4]Farley Mowat, "MacLean's Interviews Farley Mowat", MacLean's, (March, 1968), 9.

[5]"Farley Mowat's New Book", Atlantic, (April, 1970), 17. Advertisement for The Boat That Wouldn't Float.

[6]"A Man's Best Friend...", Weekend, 10.

[7]Farley Mowat, "How To Be a Canadian Writer and Succeed at It", Saturday Night, (May 16, 1953), 21.

[8]In a recent CBC radio interview Mowat charged that he had written "much finer books than The Boat That Would Not Float," the book on which the Leacock Award was based. The Dog Who Wouldn't Be is much more humorous , and could not appreciate retroactive recognition. (Mowat, "Something to Say".)

[9]"Mowat Accepts Leacock Award", Vancouver Sun, (June 27, 1970), 29.

[10]Mowat, "Something to Say".

[11]Ibid.

[12]Farley Mowat, in Lorne Parton, "Lorne Parton", Vancouver Province, (December 6, 1969), 31.

[13]Mowat, in Breslin, "Enfant Terrible", 49.

[14]Mowat, in Parton, "Lorne Parton", 31.

[15]Mowat, "MacLean's Interviews...", 64.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Himie Koshevoy, "Himie Koshevoy", Vancouver Province, (December 10, 1969), 31.

[18]Mowat, in Parton, "Lorne Parton", 31.

[19]Mowat, in Breslin, "Enfant Terrible", 49.

[20]Betty Martin, "The World of Farley Mowat", Canadian Author and Bookman, XLV (Winter, 1969), 1.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

SELECTIONS FROM THE

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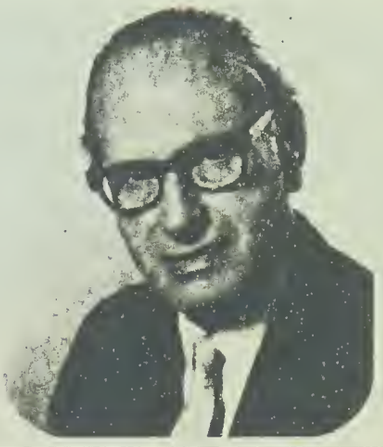

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Rabbi Plaut, of Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto, is a graduate lawyer and prolific author as well as a controversial personality. His opinions have been sought on subjects ranging from antisemitism to the pill—on panels, in newspaper columns, and on radio and TV. He is a man committed to human rights, to peaceful relations between Gentile and Jew to Canada's problems as a struggling nation.

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Formerly Associate Editorial Secretary, Department of Religious Education, Anglican Church of Canada, Ernest Harrison is now lecturer in English at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute and is on the staff of Holy Trinity Church, Toronto.

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